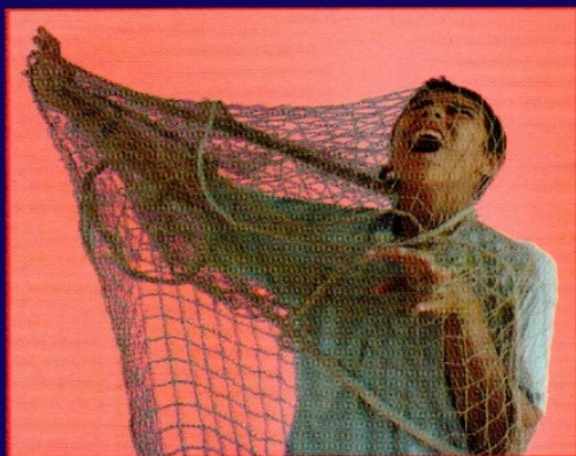


Ṛtvik-māyā-vāda-  
śata-dūṣaṇi

Exposée

100

# Deviations of Ṛtvikism



Beware of the Ṛtvik Net of Illusion

**RtVik-maya-vada-sata-dusani**


# **100 Deviations of RtVikism**

**- Beware of the RtVik Net of Illusion -**

Rtvik-māyā-vāda-  
śata-dūṣaṇi

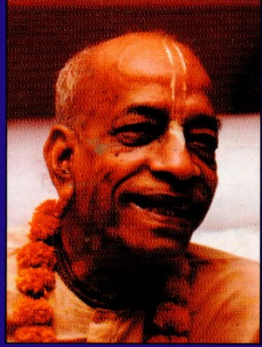
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**Deviations  
of Rtvikism**



**Beware of the Rtvik Net of Illusion**

Exposée



"Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bonafide Guru, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bonafide Spiritual Master and spread Krishna consciousness very widely, that will make me and Krishna very happy."

Srila Prabhupada's letter  
2<sup>nd</sup> December 1975



# 100 Deviations

Based on the teachings of  
His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada,  
Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness  
A project inspired by H.H. Jayapataka Maharaja

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Dedication:

To Srila Prabhupada and all the spiritual masters of the Brahma Madhva-Gaudiya-Vaisnava-sampradaya-past, present, and future.

ISKCON Law 6.4.7.2, from the section "Specifically Outlawed Doctrines and Practices" (amended, 1999)

6.4.7.2 "RtVikism" aka "Posthumous RtVik Theory," "Post-Samadhi-RtVik Theory," "Proxy Initiation Theory," "No Change Theory," etc.

The doctrine that Srila Prabhupada desired to continue to act as diksa guru after his departure from this world and did not desire any of his disciples to give diksa in succession after him is a dangerous philosophical deviation. RtVikism directly goes against the principle of parampara itself (of successive diksa-and siksa gurus), which sustains the pure teachings and practices of Krsna consciousness. This principle has been established by Krsna and is upheld by all Vaisnava-acaryas. Indeed, it is accepted by all followers of Vedic culture. RtVikism is thus an extreme deviation. It is utterly erroneous to espouse it, deluding and misguiding to teach it, and blasphemous to attribute it to Srila Prabhupada. No one who espouses, teaches, supports in any way or practices RtVikism can be a member in good standing of ISKCON.

///



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

## CONTENTS

<b>Compiled by: (in alphabetic order) .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<i>Preface.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Introduction By Jayapataka Swami.....</i>	<i>9</i>
RtVik Theory- Out of the Question .....	9
A Background to the RtVik Proxy-initiation Theory Discussions .....	9
Srila Prabhupada always follows sadhu, sastra and guru references.....	10
Srila Prabhupada Can Decide To Do Anything.....	12
Srila Prabhupada never discussed a Post-samadhi RtVik-diksa system.....	14
GBC Authority over Gurus is Srila Prabhupada's Order .....	16
RtVik-system of post-samadhi Initiations is not authorized by sastra.....	16
Srila Prabhupada as foundational siksa-guru is greater than all diksa-gurus .....	17
Understanding Srila Prabhupada's intentions for Guru Systems in ISKCON.....	17
Keeping ISKCON's respectful position in the Guru-parampara.....	18
<b>1. Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's Direct Instructions.....</b>	<b>19</b>
1 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's request to his disciples to become spiritual masters .....	19
2 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's words on the "only qualification" for becoming spiritual master .....	19
3 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's desire that his disciples create "branches of the Caitanya tree" .....	20
4 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's desire that his disciples continue the disciplic succession .....	20
5 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's statements that it is not difficult to become a spiritual master.....	21
6 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's statement that non-liberated devotees who strictly follow the parampara are still qualified to act as diksa-gurus .....	21
7 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's usage of the imperative (and thus his emphasis) in regard to his disciples becoming spiritual masters in the future .....	21
8 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's expression "You don't require large definition" .....	21
9 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's emphatic desire that his disciples function as initiating spiritual masters after his physical departure .....	21
10 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's teaching that only out of etiquette should a disciple not initiate in the physical presence of the spiritual master .....	22
11 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's explanation that anyone who can control the six urges is fit to make disciples all over the world .....	22
12 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's teaching that one must physically approach a living guru (vapuh) in order to understand spiritual teachings (vani) .....	22
13 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's "secret of success" in spiritual life .....	23
14 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's purport to the kiba vipra kiba nyasi verse and offering an interpretation that is directly opposed to Srila Prabhupada's own explanation .....	24
15 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's interest in preparing spiritual masters.....	24
16 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's mission that his followers become gurus.....	24
17 Disregarding that the guru's desire and order are the same .....	25
18 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's simple definition of a guru .....	27
19 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's explicit final orders regarding initiations after his physical departure .....	27
20 Misinterpreting Srila Prabhupada's expression "spiritual master" to mean siksa-guru not diksa-guru... ..	27
21 Ridiculing the multiple guru system Srila Prabhupada wanted .....	28
<b>2. Six Principles of RtVik-Maya-Vada by Jayapataka Swami .....</b>	<b>29</b>
22 Principle 1: RtVik-maya-vada.....	29





# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

23 Principle 2: RtVik-maya-vadi vaignava-aparadhi (RtVik-maya vadis are offenders of Vaisnavas).....	29
24 Principle 3: RtVik-maya-vadi-bhasya sunile guru-bhakti sarve-nasa (If you listen to the words of the RtVik-maya-vadis you will lose your guru-bhakti, your devotion to your spiritual master).....	29
25 Principle 4: Nahi nahi raksati dukrn-karane, bhaja govindam bhaja govindam govindam bhaja mudha-mate... (or) Tarka rahu dur (The RtVik-maya-vada cannot, through its complicated arguments and logic, cover the correct teachings of sadhu, sastra and guru) .....	30
26 Principle 5: RtVik-maya-vadis want Srila Prabhupada to personally suffer for all the world's sins. ....	31
27 Principle 6: RtVik-maya vadis jump over the guru.....	31
<b>3. Disregard of the May 28 Conversation .....</b>	<b>32</b>
28. Negating the importance of it .....	32
29. Trying to dismiss it by calling it an "old taped conversation" .....	32
30. Misinterpreting Srila Prabhupada's clear statements .....	32
31. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada's usage of the expression "officiating acarya" .....	32
32. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada usage of the term "rtvik" .....	32
33. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada's expression "regular guru" .....	32
34. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada's expression "disciple of my disciple" .....	32
35. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada' expression "granddisciple" .....	32
36. Imagining words never spoken.....	32
37. Trying to discard the validity of the tape-recording .....	32
38. Inventing a conspiracy saying the GBC tried to cover Srila Prabhupada's desire to establish a posthumous-RtVik system .....	32
39. Disregarding the GBC minutes of the conversation.....	32
40. Disregard of the testimony of the direct witnesses.....	32
41. Disregarding the rules of linguistics .....	32
An Analysis of the Conversation of May 28, 1977, from Disciple of My Disciple.....	35
<b>4. Misrepresentation of the Letter of July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977 .....</b>	<b>46</b>
42. Misrepresenting as relevant a letter which is irrelevant to the issue of initiations after Srila Prabhupada's departure .....	46
43. All bluff, no stuff .....	46
44. Misrepresenting the letter as a "final order" (the word order' is not even mentioned).....	46
45. Disregarding the fact that the letter was not worded by Srila Prabhupada but by his secretary .....	46
46. Disregarding the dictionary meaning of the word "henceforward" .....	46
47. Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's usage of the word "henceforward" .....	46
48. Disregarding the logical consequences of taking the word "henceforward" in the sense of "forever".	46
49. Imagining that Srila Prabhupada would revolutionize all he ever said about disciplic succession by the single adverb "henceforward" in a letter written by his secretary .....	46
50. Disregarding that the Temple Presidents to whom the letter is addressed wanted to know how their bhaktas and bhaktins could get initiation, not how initiations would continue after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance .....	46
51. Disregarding the connection to the May 28 May conversation .....	46
52. Disregarding the connection to the July 7 conversation.....	46
53. Disregarding that Srila Prabhupada indicated that he himself could continue to handle initiation requests from India .....	46
54. Disregarding the sentence "The name of a newly initiated disciple should be sent by the representative who has accepted him or her to Srila Prabhupada" .....	46



# 100 Deviations

55. Disregarding the direct explanation of the author of the letter Misrepresenting the lack of temporary references as meaning that the letter was forever .....	46
July 9 <sup>th</sup> , 1977 To All G.B.C., and Temple Presidents .....	47
5. <i>Misrepresenting Srila Prabhupada's Will</i> .....	56
57. Misrepresenting the expression "there is no need of any change" .....	56
58. Disregarding the chronology of events .....	56
59. Disregarding the fact that Srila Prabhupada never indicated that he wanted the "RtVik system" to continue after his disappearance .....	56
60. Concocting the meaning of the expression "my initiated disciple" .....	56
61. Taking the expression "my initiated disciple" out of context .....	56
Disregarding the history of how the expression "my initiated disciple" got inserted in the will .....	57
Disregarding the testimony of the direct witnesses .....	58
6. <i>Imposing Conditions on Srila Prabhupada</i> .....	58
64 Asking for signed orders .....	58
65 Concocting the necessity of a sentence including the word "order" .....	59
66 Demanding absurd clarifications .....	59
67 Implying that Srila Prabhupada was unable to give clear instructions .....	60
68 Fabricating the idea that Srila Prabhupada thought that his disciples weren't qualified .....	60
69 Speculating that Srila Prabhupada would have seen the future and therefore must have acted differently .....	61
70 Proclaiming that Srila Prabhupada wanted something he never mentioned as the system for the next 10,000 years .....	61
71 Putting words in Srila Prabhupada's lotus mouth .....	61
72 Forcing Srila Prabhupada to remain as diksa-guru .....	62
73. Maintaining that Srila Prabhupada nullified everything he ever taught with one single ambiguous adverb (henceforward), in one single letter not even written by himself .....	62
7. <i>Putting forward fallacious arguments</i> .....	62
74. Argument from restatement of what's accepted .....	62
75. Argument from personal testimony .....	62
76. Argument from logical necessity .....	63
77 Argument from the virtues of the doctrines .....	64
78 Argument from a lack of counter-evidence .....	64
8. <i>Refusing to acknowledge valid arguments</i> .....	65
79 Argument from a need for evidence .....	65
80 Argument from a need to show precedent .....	65
81 Argument from a need for good logic .....	65
82 Argument from a need for consistency with Srila Prabhupada's teachings .....	65
83 Argument from Srila Prabhupada's final instruction .....	66
84 Argument from how Srila Prabhupada expressed his desires .....	66
85 Argument from the need to reject new doctrines .....	66
9. <i>Disregarding the GBC Authority</i> .....	67
86 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's instruction to follow the GBC .....	67
87 Preaching a bogus doctrine .....	67
88 Saying that a guru working under the GBC is "relativized" .....	67
89 Accusing the GBC of creating "lower" standards .....	67



# 100 गुरु वैचल्येन

10. <i>Inventing Doctrines</i> .....	69
90 "Only a liberated soul can become guru" .....	69
91 "The acarya can change sastras" .....	69
92 Misuse of the expression "I am in my books" .....	69
93 "Gurus can't fall" .....	70
94 Misuse of the expression "uttama-adhikari" in the purport of Nectar of Instruction, verse 5 .....	71
95 "A liberated soul can't fall" .....	75
96 "A maha-bhagavata can't fall" .....	75
97 "Gaps in the sampradaya prove RtVikism" .....	75
98 "No need of a physical guru" .....	76
99 "The 'fallible gurus' referred to in Krsna-bhajanamrta are kula-gurus" .....	77
100 "The ISKCON Laws based on Krsna-bhajanamrta are unacceptable" .....	77
101 "We are only changing details, not principles" .....	78
102 "A Guru under the GBC cannot be "suksad-dharitva" to his disciples" .....	80
103 "We are the traditionalists" .....	81
11. <i>Consequences of RtVikism</i> .....	81
104 RtVikism is a deadly weapon of Kali.....	81
105 Guru as God-brother .....	82
106 It turns Srila Prabhupada into a zonal-acarya.....	82
107 It fosters the idea that one can take diksa from any previous acarya .....	82
108 Encourages people to take diksa outside ISKCON .....	82
109 Minimizing Srila Prabhupada's potency .....	82
110 Wasting time.....	83
111 Turning people away from Krsna Consciousness.....	83
112 Providing ammunition to the anti-cult movement .....	83
113 Offending Vaisnavas.....	83
114 It promotes irresponsibility .....	83
115 It renders discipleship meaningless .....	84
116 It breaches the law of disciplic succession .....	84
<i>Miscellaneous Speculations and General Deviations (The Goebbels approach)</i> .....	84
117 RtVikism is generated and propagated on the basis of the four defects of the conditioned soul .....	84
118 Misuse of the expression "current link" .....	84
119 Misuse of the expression "embraced by Krsna" .....	85
120 Putting forward a variety of contradictory doctrines .....	86
121 Implying that Srila Prabhupada wasn't able to judge .....	87
122 Claiming historical precedent for RtVik initiations (sauce for the goose) .....	87
123 Double standards .....	87
124 Misquoting.....	87
125 Special pleading .....	88
126 Following Ekalavya's approach .....	88
127 Following Duryodhana's approach .....	89
128 Misusing the sarva-dharman parityajya verse.....	89
129 Flag-waving.....	90
130 The Goebbels approach .....	90
<i>Conclusion</i> .....	90



# 100 ग़लत वेदवर्तन

<b>Appendix 1 .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<i>Public Notice .....</i>	<i>92</i>
To all the Hare Krsna devotees:.....	92
<b>Appendix 2:.....</b>	<b>92</b>
<i>Chronology of selected instructions of Srila Prabhupada on initiation .....</i>	<i>92</i>
1966 .....	92
1967 .....	93
1968 .....	93
1969 .....	93
1970 .....	94
1971 .....	94
1972 .....	94
1973 .....	94
1974 .....	95
1975 .....	96
1976 .....	96
1977 .....	96
<b>Appendix 3.....</b>	<b>97</b>
<i>Some Resolutions Concerning the Doctrine of RtVikism.....</i>	<i>97</i>
6.4.7.2 “Posthumous RtVik” Doctrine.....	97
1. It Is Hereby Resolved That... ..	98
2. It is hereby resolved that,.....	99

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## Preface

In the last few years many papers have been written on RtVikism, the claim that Srila Prabhupada wanted to remain as diksa-guru, even after his disappearance. One might then ask: “What is the use for yet another publication?” In consultation with senior devotees, it was decided that it would be very valuable to produce a book which contains many of the basic tenets of this deviation from standard vaisnava-siddhanta, and how these ideas are flawed. As a book is a more permanent record than papers, we hope that this publication will be used as a resource and a reference, especially in those areas where RtVikism is relatively unknown. This will give innocent devotees a chance to familiarize themselves with the real facts surrounding the ,rtwik claims, many of which are based on sensationalism and selective quoting, i.e. extracting words from a letter, book or conversation which appear to support the RtVik viewpoint without providing the surrounding explanation and without understanding the circumstances relating to the incident.

Due to the very short time frame given to produce the book, we apologize in advance for any technical flaws and lack of further explanations. We wanted to make the book available for the worldwide community of devotees gathered in Sridhama Mayapura for the 1999 Gaura-purnima festival, and therefore we have concentrated more on producing an informative publication to educate the devotees in general, rather than a lengthy scholarly discourse full of arguments discussing RtVikism ad-infinitum. The list of, RtVik deviations presented here is by no means exhaustive: we could go on pointing out more and more. The book actually exposes more than one hundred deviations, but we kept the same title as the expression sata-dusani (one hundred fallacies) is traditional of this type of works. Even various sahasra-names (one thousand names) often consist of more, or less, than a thousand holy names of the Lord. Of course, for most Srila Prabhupada’s followers it is enough to know that Srila Prabhupada never mentioned RtVikism (in any of his books, lectures, or conversations) to reject immediately. The devotees close to Srila Prabhupada in his final days also testify that he never spoke continuing initiating disciples after his disappearance. RtVikism is also not supported by any sastraic reference and it was never practiced in any bona-fide sampradaya. This speculation is simply a deviation from both standard Vaisnava practices and the desire of our Founder-Acarya, and in this book there are plenty more arguments against it.

The RtVik discussion is also a colossal misuse of time and energy which could be better spent for preaching the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu all over the world, and giving a chance to the innumerable suffering conditioned souls to take shelter of the sarikirtana movement. We hope that this book will serve as a vaccine, allowing devotees to realize that RtVikism is a complete concoction and free them up to engage wholeheartedly in the real business of fulfilling the desires of Srila Prabhupada and of his true followers.

On the cover we used the image of the net of illusion. This is meant to portray how a devotee’s spiritual intelligence can become entangled in the net of false arguments and half-truths, skillfully woven into a dangerous fabric by RtVikists, just as a net is made up of individual fibers woven together to form a strong, entangling mesh. As each fiber has no strength of its own, each RtVik argument is again and again shown to have no basis in guru, sadhu and sastra, and therefore is spiritually worthless. However, when all these dubious arguments are woven back and forth into an apparently palatable presentation,

with the added spicing of emotional appeals based on previous unfortunate experiences with initiating gurus, the net is able to cast a spell over the unwary devotee.

It is beyond the scope of this book to analyze or ever address the legitimate concerns that might have contributed to create an atmosphere of acceptance for RtVikism.

We beg forgiveness from any Vaisnava we might have knowingly or unknowingly offended in the presentation of this work.

The Publishers



## Introduction By Jayapataka Swami

### RtVik Theory- Out of the Question

The adherents, advocates and sympathizers of the RtVik theory (institutionalized post-samadhi diksa initiations by Srila Prabhupada) plead “Why not RtVik?” and “Please give the RtVik-system a chance!” They also ask, “What is wrong with a, RtVik-system of initiations?” In response to these questions I am writing this short paper. It is done quickly and later it may be improved, but is a humble effort to express what sadhu, sastra and guru says on this topic according to my realizations. I see that many sincere devotees have absorbed themselves in reading the literature and papers of protagonists of the proxy-initiation theory and have been influenced to varying degrees. In reciprocation to their kind efforts at explaining their points of views and concerns, I am writing this paper as a humble offering. The aim is to try to end the philosophical divisions, which the proxy-initiation theory has created between the devotees, by discussing the issues according to sadhu, sastra and guru.

### A Background to the RtVik Proxy-initiation Theory Discussions

The RtVik proxy-initiation-advocates strongly appeal that the July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977 letter, written by Tamala Krsna Goswami and approved by Srila Prabhupada authorizing some devotees to initiate on his behalf during his presence, should be accepted as Srila Prabhupada’s final order for all time to come. There are various problems with this proposal. One problem is that specifically Srila Prabhupada didn’t say that the process he was setting up was for all time. The July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1977 discussion didn’t discuss more than the current backlog of disciples waiting for initiation although it was in furtherance to the May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1977 discussion. In that discussion Srila Prabhupada had instructed that he would “recommend” some devotees to act as “officiating acaryas” (also known as RtViks).

His Divine Grace stated that they would give initiations “on his behalf” as a formality during his presence, since disciples shouldn’t initiate in the physical presence of their spiritual master. Srila Prabhupada also stated that the “officiating acaryas”, he would recommend to give initiations when he was no longer present with us, would, “on his order”, otherwise be “regular gurus”, “guru”, and initiators of their own disciples who would be Srila Prabhupada’s “grand-disciples” or disciples of his disciples. This was a direct order given for how initiations would continue after his physical departure. There are many other references wherein Srila Prabhupada had generally expressed his desire, intention, request, and order that in the future all his disciples should become qualified as spiritual masters and also initiate new generations of disciples. This topic has been discussed threadbare back and forth and various interpretations have been given, but the bottom line remains that the RtVik-theory proponents cannot produce any proof that Srila Prabhupada actually desired to establish a RtVik proxy-initiation system to continue when he was no longer physically present. Nor have the RtVik theory proponents demonstrated that Srila Prabhupada has given a specific order to have a post samadhi RtVik proxy-initiation system established in ISKCON. Nevertheless, based on speculative interpretation of the purpose of the July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977 letter and their practical convictions many of them still feel that the rtvik proxy-initiation theory is the actual desire of Srila Prabhupada. I would like to demonstrate from various angles that it isn’t at all possible that Srila Prabhupada has desired such a system, nor is there any reasonable proof that he did. To the contrary vast evidence points to His Divine Grace desiring and requesting that all his qualified disciples become siksa and direct diksa-gurus and that this is Srila Prabhupada’s authorized system.

It is also important to mention that devotees in ISKCON have various sincere concerns about the application of the guru-system in ISKCON and the aberrations in application which have occurred. This has produced misgivings in the system of guru-parampara. This is seen as one of the causes or inspirations for the RtVik theory. The hope is that if the understanding and application of guru-tattva in ISKCON is properly analyzed and reviewed, to insure it is chaste according to sadhu, sastra, and



guru, it can satisfy those devotees who have lost their confidence in the previous system. To go into those points is not the purpose of this paper, although I acknowledge the need to do so. It is also important to recognize that those persons who have accepted the ,RtVik theory may not be so easily convinced merely by changes in application. They will need to be convinced about disciples and followers of Srila Prabhupada being diksa gurus in their own right based on the fundamental principles and instructions of Srila Prabhupada. It would be auspicious if ISKCON's senior preachers would hear and discuss with those ,RtVik proponents willing to do so in order to arrive at an early favorable solution. It appears that everyone wants to satisfy the desire of Srila Prabhupada. In order to achieve that end it is important to clearly understand what it is that Srila Prabhupada wanted and ordered.

## Srila Prabhupada always follows sadhu, sastra and guru references

The reason for explaining this point is to firmly establish that Srila Prabhupada was totally committed to doing everything according to sadhu, sastra and guru. Therefore, whatever ISKCON GBC and ISKCON followers do should also be clearly established according to sastra. Since proxy initiations by a spiritual master after his disappearance is not a normal occurrence found in sastra, Srila Prabhupada wouldn't and didn't establish such a system. The function of initiations "on behalf of" Srila Prabhupada was clearly only meant to be during his physical presence. No pro-RtVik advocate has shown anywhere in the Vedic literatures where such a system of proxy-initiations after the spiritual master's departure exists. The only basis they give is a fanatical interpretation of the July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977 letter, which ignores Srila Prabhupada's earlier statement that initiations "on his behalf" are only a formality in his presence. If we can all accept this principle that whatever we do must be authorized by sadhu, sastra and guru then we can all cooperate more easily.

His Divine Grace Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada explained that his "secret of success" was the fact that he strictly followed the instructions of his spiritual master Om Visnupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura.

"... we took up the mission of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and Bhaktivinoda Thakura to preach the cult of Caitanya Mahaprabhu all over the world, under the protection of all the predecessor acaryas, and we find that our humble attempt has been successful. We followed the principles especially explained by Srila Visvanatha, Cakravarti Thakura in his commentary on the Bhagavad-gita verse vyavasayatmika buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana. According to this instruction of Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, it is the duty of a disciple to follow strictly the orders of his spiritual master. The secret of success in advancement in spiritual life is the firm faith of the disciple in the orders of his spiritual master." (Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Adi-lila 12.8p)

Srila Prabhupada diligently protected the purity of ISKCON by always insuring that ISKCON's activities remained in accordance with sadhu, sastra and guru. It is inconceivable to consider that Srila Prabhupada would ever do anything which wasn't in accordance with sadhu, sastra and guru principles and references. Moreover Srila Prabhupada taught that a fundamental principle of Kṛṣṇa consciousness was that the spiritual master and all Vaisnavas must always follow sastra as the basis for all Kṛṣṇa conscious activities. Srila Prabhupada has instructed this throughout his transcendental literatures which are the ultimate authority for the Krishna consciousness Movement.

"Srila Narottama dasa Thakura advises, sadhu-sastra guru-vakya, hrdaye kariya aikya. The meaning of this instruction is that one must consider the instructions of the sadhu, the revealed scriptures and the spiritual master in order to understand the real purpose of spiritual life. Neither a sadhu (saintly person or Vaisnava) nor a bona fide spiritual master says anything that is beyond the scope of the sanction of the revealed scriptures. Thus the statements of the revealed scriptures correspond to those of the bona fide spiritual master and saintly persons. One must therefore act with reference to these three important sources of understanding." (Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Adi-lila 7.48 Purport)



# 100 deviations

Srila Prabhupada again emphasizes that spiritual matters must always be tested according to sadhu, sastra and guru.

“As stated by Narottama dasa Thakura, sadhu-sastra guru: one has to test all spiritual matters according to the instructions of saintly persons, scriptures and the spiritual master. The spiritual master is one who follows the instructions of his predecessors, namely the sadhus, or saintly persons. A bona fide spiritual master does not mention anything not mentioned in the authorized scriptures. Ordinary people have to follow the instructions of sadhu, sastra and guru. Those statements made in the sastras and those made by the bona fide sadhu or guru cannot differ from one another.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.16.1p)

The ,RtVik proponents usually say that whatever quotation is given later is more important. So they might say that Srila Prabhupada had a different idea in the latter days of his pastimes from July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977 and on. However a quick search of Srila Prabhupada’s conversations during the last days of his pastimes shows that he is still having the same ideas. Srila Prabhupada’s ideas don’t change since they are based on following sadhu, sastra and guru and not on speculation or material ideas. Here are some of Srila Prabhupada’s final conversations in which he mentions the essential aspect of following sadhu, sastra and guru:

**Prabhupada:** *And we are following what Krsna says. Then our life, success...*

**Prabhupada:** *According to our sastra, mind is meant for speculation. It does not give us any definite knowledge. My mind is working in one way; your mind is working another way. There is no conclu... Manorathenasati dhavato bahih. This is the result of mental speculation. And Gita alo says that manah sasthanindriyani prakrti-sthani karsati. This spiritual spark, being bound up by the mind and the senses, is struggling hard on the material nature. And he’s simply struggling. No fixed up condition. Everyone will say, “I think this is right.” What is right, he does not know. That is struggle. Is it not? (Room Conversation. Vrndavana, October 13, 1977)*

**Prabhupada:** *Viraraghavacarya, Sanatana Gosvami, Visvanatha Cakravarti.. We are just trying to explain their ideas. We are teeny.*

**Pradyumna:** *I think your commentary on Srimad-Bhagavatam will go down in history as one of the most..., one of the best commentaries. It will go down.*

**Prabhupada:** *Let us try for that.*

*(Room Conversation. Vrndavana, October 13, 1977)*

**Prabhupada:** *And Dr. Ghosh has his scheme, but actually the scheme is there in the Bhagavad gita and Srimad-Bhagavatam. We want to introduce that scheme to our Gurukula. We haven’t got to manufacture scheme. Is that correct?*

**Giriraja:** *Yes.*

*(Room Conversation Vrndavana, October 18, 1977)*

**Prabhupada:** *Sruta grhitaya. And sruta grhitaya is Vedanta knowledge, not sentimental. Sruta-grhitaya. That is sound knowledge. Discuss Bhagavatam daily, as much as possible. Everything will be clarified. Because Bhagavata is the essence. Nigama-kalpa-tarot galitarn phalam idam. And vyasadeva-kṛta. Kim anyaih sastraih. When he’s self-realized, he made this. Maha-muni-kṛte. So the more we read Srimad- Bhagavatam, the knowledge becomes clarified. Each and every verse-transcendental. Is this clear?*

*(Room Conversation. Vrndavana, October 21, 1977)*

**Prabhupada:** *And all the acaryas say. We have to follow the acaryas. Very good.*

*(Prabhupada Vigil: Vrndavana, November 1, 1977)*



# 100 deviations

*Therefore it is amply clear that Srila Prabhupada right to the very end of his visible pastimes was totally committed to not changing any principles of sadhu, sastra and guru, but rather to preserve these principles at all costs. Had Srila Prabhupada wanted to make such a drastic change in everything he had instructed to do in his books, lectures, conversations, and let tars he certainly had plenty of time to do so. He didn't because he had no idea of anything other than his own disciples becoming "regular gurus" and initiating their own disciples after his departure since nothing else is given in sastra. The importance of sastra as the center is illustrated in the following quotation:*

*"Srila Narottama dasa Thakura says, sadhu-sastra guru-vakya, cittete kariya aikya. One should accept a thing as genuine by studying the words of saintly people, the spiritual master and sastra. The actual center is sastra, the revealed scripture. If a spiritual master does not speak according to revealed scripture, he is not to be accepted. Similarly, if a saintly person does not speak according to the sastra, he is not a saintly person. Sastra is the center for all." (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila 20.352p)*

## Srila Prabhupada Can Decide To Do Anything

Yet sometimes the pro-RtVik camp claim there is nothing wrong with the Srila Prabhupada instituting a post disappearance proxy-initiation system since Srila Prabhupada as the "Acarya", had changed many things in the past so he could also change this detail in sastra. (By discussing this point I don't accept that Srila Prabhupada actually ordered to have such a system of RtVik initiations after his physical presence. This is another aspect of RtVik-maya; to discuss a detail without ever establishing the first primary point that Srila Prabhupada never specifically ordered such a system to continue after his departure.)

The RtVik camp says Srila Prabhupada can set new "precedences" and make changes in sastra. In other words indirectly they are accepting that the concept of a system for giving initiations after the spiritual master has physically left the planet by proxy or RtVik initiators is not authorized anywhere according to sastric evidences. If it is authorized anywhere by sastra then they should show it, but so far nothing has been demonstrated. Sometimes it is argued that Srila Prabhupada had already instituted a RtVik-system in his presence, but authorizing some disciples to help him in any of the aspects of initiation in his presence doesn't break the principle of disciplic succession. No one is arguing that Srila Prabhupada in his presence could authorize disciples to assist him as RtViks since it was just an assisting role.

The post samadhi proxy initiations is something Srila Prabhupada never discussed since he clearly said initiation "on his behalf" was a formality because in the presence of the spiritual master one shouldn't initiate. Sastra always talks of disciplic succession which means after one spiritual master leaves this world he is succeeded by his disciples who connect new devotees to the parampara by initiating and guiding disciples. To change this concept is a very major deviation from the standard understanding of disciplic succession. If Srila Prabhupada was going to establish something so different from the standard or regular system, he had already given in his books, then he would have discussed it at length and explained why it was according to sastra and guru. Everything Srila Prabhupada instructed he backed up with sastra if it was an important issue.

Now the pro-RtVik's latest plea due to lack of any additional positive evidence or statement from Srila Prabhupada is to claim that there are missing tapes. In this way the discussion goes into a total anarchy of thought since if we claim the lack of evidence signifies evidence then anyone can speculate anything. In ISKCON the GBC and devotees must depend on what instructions we have. We cannot depend on evidence we don't have.

Actually Srila Prabhupada always followed the sastra and didn't change any principle of sadhu, sastra and guru. In the details of how to apply the sadhu, sastra and guru injunctions Srila Prabhupada





# 100 deviations

may have set precedences, but that is not creating something new which wasn't in sastra. In order to demonstrate that, kindly consider the points the RtVik proponents cite as examples of Srila Prabhupada setting a new precedence not in sastra.

Reducing the number of rounds from 64 to 16: This doesn't change the principle of chanting and counting rounds every day. It merely changes the number of rounds. Actually Srila Damodara Maharaja, Srila Prabhupada's Godbrother, informed us that 64 rounds was for those who didn't go out and preach, but for those who were actively preaching in the Gaudiya Matha 16 rounds was allowed by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. So actually Srila Prabhupada didn't change anything, but applied the preachers standard to ISKCON and engaged us in preaching.

Performing marriages: This is also not against sastra and Srila Prabhupada explained this specific point in Bhagavad gita Ch. 18 on Vivaha-yajna.

*"The yogis should perform acts for the advancement of human society. There are many purificatory processes for advancing a human being to spiritual life. The marriage ceremony, for example, is considered to be one of these sacrifices. It is called vivaha-yajna. Should a sannyasi, who is in the renounced order of life and who has given up his family relations, encourage the marriage ceremony? The Lord says here that any sacrifice which is meant for human welfare should never be given up. Vivaha-yajna, the marriage ceremony, is meant to regulate the human mind so that it may become peaceful for spiritual advancement. For most men, this `vivaha-yajna should be encouraged even by persons in the renounced order of life. Sannyasis should never associate with women, but that does not mean that one who is in the lower stages of life, a young man, should not accept a wife in the marriage ceremony. All prescribed sacrifices are meant for achieving the Supreme Lord." (Bhagavad gita 18.5p)*

Allowing women to live in temples: Srila Prabhupada explained that the word "Matha" in Gaudiya Matha meant monastery and in a "Matha" only renounced asramas and elderly widows lived. Srila Prabhupada explained that therefore didn't create Gaudiya Mathas and instead made temples. Srila Prabhupada explained that there is no absolute restriction for women or householders living in a temple. Just as in the Srirangam Temple-complex families and women live. Therefore, Srila Prabhupada preserved the sastric principle.

Giving Gayatri by tape: This is simply "utility is the principle"! The sastra states that the disciple should hear from the spiritual master. Srila Prabhupada instructed that only those approved for receiving second initiation could listen to the tape. So Srila Prabhupada didn't change a principle, but merely applied it using modern facilities. Nevertheless, this is a detail and doesn't establish that Srila Prabhupada did or would do something against sadhu, sastra and guru.

Srila Prabhupada giving initiation to women and foreigners: RtVik Proponents sometimes also state that Srila Prabhupada's giving Vedic and pancaratrika initiation to women and foreigners is an example of making a sastric changing precedent. Actually Srila Prabhupada simply followed Om Visnupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura's pancaratrika initiation system. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura didn't change principles but actually applied the principles after understanding their purpose. Srila Prabhupada not only how we must preserve the pancaratrika initiation system given by his spiritual master, but that they didn't break the principles of sastra, but actually preserved them:

"Regarding the validity of the brahminical status as we accept it, because in the present age there is no observance of the Garbhadhana ceremony, even a person born in brahmana family is not considered a brahmana, he is called dvija-bandhu or unqualified son of a brahmana. Under the circumstances, the conclusion is that the whole population is now sudra, as it is stated kalau sudra sambhava. So for sudras there is no initiation according to the Vedic system, but according to the Pancaratrika system initiation is offered to a person who is inclined to take to Krsna consciousness.

During my Guru Maharaja's time, even a person was coming from a brahmana family, he was initiated according to the Pancaratrika system taking him to be a sudra. So the birthright brahmanism is not



# 100 Deviations

applicable at the present moment. The sacred thread inaugurated by my Guru Maharaja according to pancaratika system and Hari-bhakti vilasa by Srila Sanatana Goswami must continue. It does not matter whether the priestly class accepts it or not. When my Guru Maharaja Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Prabhupada introduced this system, it was protested even by His inner circle of Godbrothers or friends. Of course He had actually no Godbrothers, but there were many disciples of Bhaktivinoda Thakura who were considered as Godbrothers who protested against this action of my Guru Maharaja, but He didn't care for it.

Actually one who takes to chanting Hare Krsna Mantra offenselessly immediately becomes situated transcendently and therefore he has no need of being initiated with sacred thread, but Guru Maharaja introduced this sacred thread because a Vaisnava was being mistaken as belonging to the material caste. To accept a Vaisnava in material caste system is hellish consideration (naraki buddhi). Therefore, to save the general populace from being offender to a Vaisnava, He persistently introduced this sacred thread ceremony and we must follow His footsteps...

*It is our duty therefore to train all kinds of men up to the standard of qualified brahmanas, initiating them as such by qualification in accordance with the above authorities, so that they may go on progressively unhindered in their march back to home, back to Godhead. This system introduced by my Guru Maharaja is a chance for all the members of the society, scientifically based and applied, apart from the exploitative sentiment of birthright 'caste' system, to become actually situated on the transcendental platform..." (Srila Prabhupada Letter to Acyutananda Nov. 14, 1970)*

The principle is that a Vaisnava is automatically a brahmana due to his devotional service to Lord Krsna. Therefore the pancaratika system of initiation practiced by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura was simply an application of the underlying principles which were already accepted by the previous acaryas.

## Srila Prabhupada never discussed a Post-samadhi RtVik-diksa system

Actually Srila Prabhupada never mentioned anything about a system of RtVik proxy-initiations after his physical absence, nor is it mentioned in any sastra. So it is not a mere tradition or application, but the fundamental principle of guru-parampara, that after the spiritual master departs from this mortal world, the next generation of disciples should take up the responsibility of continuing the guru-parampara. There are countless quotations on this topic which I am sure you are all aware of.

The RtVik proponents should understand that establishing a post-samadhi initiation system is a drastic change to the guru-parampara system. Trying to minimize the importance, or impact of this practically total change to the parampara system, through clever words is simply misleading innocent people. By avoiding the obvious requirements of some direct instructions from Srila Prabhupada it appears as if they are trying to get their system established "through the back door" without any actual sadhu; sastra and guru evidence at all that this is a valid system.

I was asked, "What is wrong with RtVik post-samadhi proxy initiations?" What is obviously wrong is that it contradicts the system elucidated by Srila Prabhupada known as guru-parampare. Although this system should be well known to all, since I was asked I am providing some sastric references from Srila Prabhupada books and lectures below.

*"One who is now the disciple is the next spiritual master. And one cannot be a bona fide and authorized spiritual master unless one has been strictly obedient to his spiritual master. Brahmaji, as a disciple of the Supreme Lord, received the real knowledge and imparted it to his dear disciple Narada, and similarly Narada, as spiritual master, handed over this knowledge to Vyasa and so on." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.9.43) "The perfection of the parampara system, or the path of disciplic succession, is further confirmed. In the previous chapter it has been established that Brahmaji, the firstborn living entity, received knowledge directly from the Supreme Lord, and the same knowledge was imparted to Narada, the next disciple. Narada asked to receive the*



*knowledge, and Brahmaji imparted it upon being asked. Therefore, asking for transcendental knowledge from the right person and receiving it properly is the regulation of the disciplic succession. This process is recommended in the Bhagavadgita (4.2). The inquisitive student must approach a qualified spiritual master to receive transcendental knowledge by surrender, submissive inquiries and service.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.5.1)*

Srila Prabhupada describes lucidly the principle of guru parampara or disciplic succession. It is clear that one spiritual master passes the knowledge to his disciple through direct communication. That disciple becomes guru and in turn passes onto the next generation.

*“The transcendental knowledge of the Vedas was first uttered by God to Brahma, the creator of this particular universe. From Brahma the knowledge descended to Narada; from Narada to Vyasa-deva, from Vyasa-deva to Madhva, and in this process of disciplic succession the transcendental knowledge transmitted by one disciple to another until it reached Lord Gauranga, Sri Krsna Caitanya, who posed as the disciple and successor of Sri Isvara Puri. The present Acaryadeva is the tenth disciplic representative from Sri Rupa Gosvami, the original representative of Lord Caitanya who preached this transcendental tradition in its fullness. The knowledge that we receive from our Gurudeva is not different from that imparted by God Himself and the succession of the acaryas in the preceptorial line of Brahma. We adore this auspicious day as Sri Vyasa-puja-tithi, because the Acarya is the living representative of Vyasa-deva, the divine compiler of the Vedas, the Puranas, the Bhagavad gita, the Mahabharata, and the Srimad-Bhagavatam.” (Science of Self-Realization, Ch. 2: Choosing a Spiritual Master)*

Srila Prabhupada has expressed his personal desire on many occasions to see his disciples become spiritual masters and initiate new generations of disciples. I am not mentioning all those well-known quotations here, but mainly the principle of disciplic succession. Still the following verse highlights His Divine Grace’s consistent mood.

*“Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I have got my disciples, so in the future these many disciples may have many branches of disciplic succession.” (Los Angeles, 25 January, 1969)*

*“Every one of you should be spiritual master next.” (Hamburg, September 5, 1969)*

*“Everyone can, whoever is initiated, he is competent to make disciples. But as a matter of etiquette they do not do so in the presence of their spiritual master. This is the etiquette. Otherwise, they are competent. They can make disciples and spread they are competent to make disciples.” (Detroit, July 18, 1971 )*

*“Evam. parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh. So we have to follow the acarya. Then, when we are completely, cent per cent follower of acarya, then you can also act as acarya. This is the process.” (Mayapura, April 6, 1975)*

The following verse not only illustrates the system of disciple succession, but also the qualification for being a spiritual master. One must learn properly from one’s own spiritual master and then transmit that knowledge intact to the next generation.

*“The spiritual master is the representative of the Supreme Lord. How does he become the representative? If one says that such and such an object is a pair of spectacles, and if he teaches his disciple in that way, there is no mistake as to the identity of the object. The spiritual master is he who has captured the words of a particular disciplic succession. In the case given, the key word is “spectacles”-that’s all. The spiritual master does not have to say anything beyond that. This is the qualification. Krsna says, “I am the Supreme,” and the spiritual master says, “Krsna is the Supreme.” It is not that to be a representative of Krsna or to be a spiritual master one has to have any extraordinary qualification. He simply has to carry the message from the authority as it is without any personal interpretation. As soon as there is some personal interpretation, the message is lost and the instructions become offensive. A person who interprets the scriptures*



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

*according to his own whims should be immediately rejected.” (Elevation to Krsna Consciousness, Ch. 6: Taking to Krsna Consciousness)*

Srila Prabhupada gives an emphatic instruction in the above quotation to reject immediately any person who interprets the scriptures according to his own whims. This demonstrates how motivated whimsical interpretations of scripture is possible, but that it is a serious offense and the person doing it should be rejected immediately. Throughout Srila Prabhupada books and in all the Vedic literatures the principle of disciplic succession is repeated again and again. It isn't a new or unknown topic. This principle is well known to everyone in Vedic culture. Why the RtVik proponents still ask, “Why not RtVik?” is amazing to anyone with even basic Vedic knowledge.

The principle of Vedic knowledge is that there must be some sastra to back it. The onus is upon the proponents of the RtVik-initiation theory to support their doctrine with direct sastric evidence. Indirect interpretations would be like Sankaracarya's indirect method of establishing his mayavada philosophy and can't be accepted by any true follower of the Vedas. Since no such system exists in Vedic references it is a still-born concept. It won't serve any useful purpose to stubbornly insist on a theory that isn't supported by the Vedas. It is a whimsical interpretation and according to Srila Prabhupada such a person should be immediately rejected.

## GBC Authority over Gurus is Srila Prabhupada's Order

Sometimes a small point is made into a major issue in the RtVik discussions. The fact that ISKCON gurus are under the supervision of the GBC body is considered a limiting factor. However it simply enshrines the principle of guru-parampara. “Every guru is first a disciple.”

A disciple must carry out the order of his spiritual master. Since it was the instruction of Om Visnupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura to establish a GBC (Governing Body Commission), Srila Prabhupada said the failure to do so was an offense against guru, and it was that offense which was the cause of the disintegration of the original Gaudiya Matha. Similarly today for spiritual masters in ISKCON to follow Srila Prabhupada's instructions and cooperate under the supervision and coordination of a GBC (Governing Body Commission) certainly doesn't reduce their stature since it is merely carrying out the orders of their spiritual master and ISKCON's Founder-Acarya Srila Prabhupada.

## RtVik-system of post-samadhi Initiations is not authorized by sastra

Srila Prabhupada meticulously followed his spiritual master and the predecessor acaryas. Since they have never advocated, nor does sastra advocate, a RtVik-system of initiation beyond the presence of the spiritual master, there is no way that Srila Prabhupada would have wanted it to happen. With no disrespect meant for the sincere devotees who are trying to please Srila Prabhupada through studying his final orders, but in all honesty it is really an akasa-kusuma to base a whole lifetime of devotional service on the idea that Srila Prabhupada wanted RtViks to give initiation on his behalf after his departure, when he never specifically said that and rather said the opposite time and time again.

Srila Prabhupada's Godbrothers informed that after the departure of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura they considered having a RtVik-system for about five minutes. Then it was brought up that it isn't approved anywhere in sastra and that was it. The whole idea was dropped. That was responsible on their part.

Since it is a totally new concept, something Srila Prabhupada never discussed-rather something totally against his consistent instructions-had he wanted to institute this system, he would have obviously discussed a lot about it. We find absolutely no mention of any such concept. It exists only in the imagination of the post-samadhi RtVik proponents, possibly out of some desperation for some change from the present system. However, unless a specific order is found, how can they expect any loyal follower of Srila Prabhupada to accept this proposal? How apparently intelligent devotees are maintaining their attachment to this idea is something amazing to all of us. We can only pray





that since they all appear to be sincere souls they will soon have a change of heart and realize that the post-samadhi rtwik initiation system really isn't pleasing to Srila Prabhupada.

## **Srila Prabhupada as foundational siksa-guru is greater than all diksa-gurus**

Srila Prabhupada as ISKCON's Founder-Acarya is considered the Adi-guru of our branch of the sampradaya. As such he is the Foundational siksa guru for all ISKCON devotees. In ISKCON re-evaluation of the guru-tattva, which is scheduled for this years GBC meeting, establishing that every devotee in ISKCON has a unique and personal direct relationship with Srila Prabhupada, is certainly on the agenda. Whether as disciple, grand-disciple, and siksa-disciple everyone has a direct access to Srila Prabhupada and His Divine Grace's full mercy. There is no need of inventing some new scheme in order to be connected with Srila Prabhupada. The existing methods are adequate and rather to do something not authorized by Srila Prabhupada and sastra will simply create more distance between Srila Prabhupada and the devotee.

In the refined concept of our guru-disciple relationships in Krsna consciousness it is understood that siksa will play the prominent role and will get the strongest acknowledgement. Every devotee should work toward this end. Trying to create Srila Prabhupada as the only diksa guru for the next ten thousand years is simply a deviation, which is creating an obstacle in establishing what Srila Prabhupada actually wanted in the Guru-Disciple system and relationships in ISKCON. If someone is not satisfied with their relationship with their diksa-guru there are options authorized in the sastra for resolving that through acceptance of a siksa guru. It would be interesting to discuss to what extent that relationship can be simply with Srila Prabhupada. That is a more viable discussion to hold as many previous acaryas have had direct siksa relationships with one of their previous acaryas and that was recognized. Since siksa and diksa are not to be considered different establishing that connection is reasonable. Trying to establish multi-generational diksa relationships is nowhere to be found as a Vedic authorized system and valuable time and energy is simply being wasted by attempting to do so.

## **Understanding Srila Prabhupada's intentions for Guru Systems in ISKCON**

Srila Prabhupada didn't want to create an acarya nor many acaryas if the institution in the sense the Gaudiya Matha considers an acarya as the institutional head. Srila Prabhupada had already established the GBC as the Ultimate Managing Authority for ISKCON. Srila Prabhupada did express on April 22th, 1977 that he was going to make "gurus". On May 28th, 1977 Srila Prabhupada stated he would recommend some devotees to act as Officiating Acaryas who would be a guru, a regular guru by his order, etc. Being made a regular guru by the order of one's spiritual master is different than being a fully liberated Acarya. The role is similar in terms of caring for disciples and representing the previous acarya, but the scope would be different. A regular guru would be an acarya only for his disciples, initiated or aspiring. A guru made "on the order" of his spiritual master should always follow the spiritual master's order and never consider himself independent or above such orders.

In this way, if some clear discussion and study of the topic is held it would be possible to establish exactly what perimeters an "officiating acarya" or regular guru in ISKCON should have. It lies beyond the scope of this paper to go into details of that topic. I presume that will be the main task the GBC is intending to deal with during the coming meetings. However, it would be beneficial if devotees concentrated on defining this role. We should avoid concocting something not authorized in sastra and make the correct adjustments wherever we are not applying the principles properly.

Often many lacuna in the applications of guru-tattva in ISKCON's history, after Srila Prabhupada's departure, are brought up to create an impassioned appeal for why the RtVik theory is the only viable solution. Again that is producing a whimsical solution to a real problem. It is not acceptable. What is acceptable is discussing how to make the real guru-parampara, that Srila Prabhupada wanted, work in an effective manner.





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If all devotees would assist in this effort it would be very positive. Creating a total picture of guru-parampara and every devotee's relationships with Lord Krsna, Lord Caitanya, the previous acaryas, Srila Prabhupada and siksa and diksa-gurus is the most important thing that can be done at present. I hope to be able to write a separate paper on that topic. I bring up the topic here simply to invite the proponents of the RtVik theory to be very introspective and hopefully they will understand that it is more pleasing to Srila Prabhupada to consider how to apply what he directly said he wanted in the form of regular gurus. It is certainly counter productive to try to create a new paradigm which doesn't exist anywhere in sadhu, sastra and guru references.

## Keeping ISKCON's respectful position in the Guru-parampara

ISKCON and Krsna consciousness are claiming to be bona fide Vedic sampradayas. Everything we do must be backed up by Vedic literature in order to maintain that respect with the other religious groups and sampradayas. It is one thing that RtVik proponents can sentimentally convince Srila Prabhupada's followers about accepting their speculations, but how do the RtVik proponents intend to convince other sampradayas who only want to see Vedic evidence for anything we do? In this way the RtVik proponents, if they have their way, will turn ISKCON into an apa-sampradaya or an unauthorized disciplic succession. The only reasonable way of proceeding is according to sadhu, sastra and guru and not according to the speculations of uninitiated and untrained persons.

Consider how our previous acaryas have worked so hard to establish the Brahma-Madhva-Gaudiya-sampradaya as a unique and bona fide Vedic sampradaya no less valid than the existing four Vaisnava-sampradayas, and rather the best of all! Consider how Sanatana Gosvami compiled Hari-bhakti-vilasa to establish that we have a bona fide system of worship. Baladeva Vidyabhusana has given the Govinda-bhasya commentary on Vedanta-sutra to establish our philosophy. Gopala Bhatta Gosvami established a bona fide system of samskaras and reformatory ceremonies and sacrifices. Bhaktivinoda Thakura established that our sampradaya is not simply some degraded sahajiyas, babajis or caste gosvamis, but actually based on solid sadhu, sastra and guru evidence. Om Visnupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura established our parampara and system at applying the Vedic, pancaratika and Bhagavad-gita principles. Srila Prabhupada worked so hard to have the Gaudiya Matha, academic institutions, Indian and worldwide public recognize ISKCON, its philosophy and its international devotees as bona fide members of the disciplic succession. Everything was carefully done. If the unauthorized non-Vedic RtVik post samadhi proxy initiation system were to be established in ISKCON then all the efforts of these acaryas would be discarded and ISKCON would be considered an apa-sampradaya or deviant succession.

Certainly the GBC and devotees in general won't allow that to happen. Hopefully those who currently advocate rtvik ideas will reconsider their stand and remain solidly with Srila Prabhupada and the previous acaryas.

The July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977 letter does not constitute a direct order for continuing the process of initiation after Srila Prabhupada's departure. Actually Srila Prabhupada clearly stated, in the following excerpt from Folio on October 18, 1977, that if his health improved he might start initiating again:

**Prabhupada:** *Hare Krsna. One Bengali gentleman has come from New York?*

**Tamale Krsna:** *Yes. Mr. Sukamal Roy Chowdury.*

**Prabhupada:** *So I have deputed some of you to initiate. Hm?*

**Tamale Krsna:** *Yes. Actually... Yes, Srila Prabhupada.*

**Prabhupada:** *So I think Jayapataka can do that if he likes. I have already deputed. Tell him.*

**Tamale Krsna:** *Yes.*

**Prabhupada:** *So, deputies, Jayapataka's name was there?*

**Bhagavan:** *It is already on there, Srila Prabhupada. His name was on that list.*

**Prabhupada:** *So I depute him to do this at Mayapura, and you may go with him. I stop for the time being. Is that all right?*



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*Tamale Krsna: Stopped doing what, Srila Prabhupada?*

*Prabhupada: This initiation. I have deputed the, my disciples. Is it clear or not?*

*Giriraja: It's clear.*

*Prabhupada: You have got the list of the names?*

*Tamale Krsna: Yes, Srila Prabhupada.*

*Prabhupada: And if by Krsna's grace I recover from this condition, then I shall begin again, or I may not be pressed in this condition to initiate. It is not good.*

In October, 1977, months after the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter, which according to RtVik supporters permanently established the RtVik-system, Srila Prabhupada stated he may begin initiating again which would have stopped the RtVik-system. It is clear that the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter was not considered by Srila Prabhupada as a sacrosanct Final Order on initiations. It is not reasonable to consider RtVik as a system that would continue when he wasn't present based on this letter alone.

I am writing this paper in the mood of searching for some common ground and understanding. Since I feel the devotees, I talked to sincerely want to please Srila Prabhupada I have taken the time and energy to write this paper. My hope is that it will make it more clear what is required to please Srila Prabhupada. Also this is a humble appeal to all sincere devotees, who want to please Srila Prabhupada and the previous acaryas, that the only way to do so is within the clear framework of sadhu, sastra and guru references. The RtVik theory isn't an acceptable alternative since it isn't found anywhere in sadhu, sastra and guru references.

Your servant, Jayapataka Swami

## 1. Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's Direct Instructions

Throughout his preaching Srila Prabhupada consistently presented only one version regarding the disciplic succession: every disciple is to become qualified and initiate disciples after the disappearance of his own spiritual master. The pro-RtViks disregard these direct instructions of Srila Prabhupada.

### 1 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's request to his disciples to become spiritual masters

*"That is a chance given, that you can become a brahmana,, you can become a great devotee of Lord Krsna, and you can become the spiritual master of the world...If you, some of you at least understand this science and take up this science, you become future hope of the, this country or the world. That is my request to you, that you should take this chance and become a spiritual master for all the people." (New York, July 29, 1966)*

### 2 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's words on the "only qualification" for becoming spiritual master

*"So there is no bar for anyone, that one cannot become the spiritual master. Everyone can become spiritual master, provided he knows the science of Krsna. That is the only qualification." (New York, August 17, 1966)*

*"You have to find out that whether this man is coming from disciplic succession, srotriyam... Just like in the Bhagavad-gita it is said, evam parampara-praptam: 'By this disciplic succession, this science of Bhagavad gita was learned.' So you have to approach the spiritual master who is coming down from that disciplic succession. Then he is bona fide." (San Francisco, March 3, 1967)*

*"Because in Indian society it is simply taken that the brahmanas and the sannyasi can be spiritual master. But Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "No. Anyone can become spiritual master provided he's conversant with the science." (April 5-6, 1967, San Francisco)*



# 100 deviations

*“This is acarya. You behave yourself exactly as it is stated in the sastra, as it is ordered by Caitanya Mahaprabhu, as it is ordered by Krsna... Apani acari jivere sikhaya. And you teach all your disciples, who comes to you as your disciples, teach them. This is acarya.*

*So acarya, guru, representative, it is not difficult. Simply one has to become very, very sincere.”*  
(Vrndavana, August 15, 1974)

*“So try to follow the path of acarya process. Then life will be successful. And to become acarya is not very difficult. First of all, to become very faithful servant of your acarya, follow strictly what he says. Try to please him and spread Krsna consciousness. That’s all. It is not at all difficult.”*  
(Mayapura, April 6, 1975)

## 3 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada’s desire that his disciples create “branches of the Caitanya tree”

*“You each be guru, “ he said. “As I have five thousand disciples or ten thousand, so you have ten thousand each. In this way, create branches and branches of the Caitanya tree.”* (Mayapura GBC meetings 1976)

## 4 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada’s desire that his disciples continue the disciplic succession

*“Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I have got my disciples, so in the future these many disciples may have many branches of disciplic succession.”* (Los Angeles, 25 January, 1969)

**Prabhupada:** Every one of us messiah. Anyone Krsna conscious, he’s the messiah. Every one. Why one? All of us. Gaurangera bhakta gene, jane jane sakti dhari, brahmada tari saksi(?): “The devotee of Lord Caitanya, every one has so immense power that every one, they can deliver the whole universe.” Gaurangera bhakta jane, jane jane sakti..., brahmada tari... That is Gauranga’s men.

**Tamala Krsna:** Only you are that powerful, Srila Prabhupada. We’re like...

**Prabhupada:** Why you are not? You are my disciples.

**Tamala Krsna:** We’re like the bugs.

**Prabhupada:** “Like father, like son.” You should be. Gaurangera bhakta..., jane. Everyone. ‘therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, amara ajnaya guru hana tara’ei desa. He asked everyone, “Just become guru. “ Follow His instruction. You become guru. Amara ajnaya. Don’t manufacture ideas. Amara ajnaya. “What I say, you do. You become a guru.” Where is the difficulty? “And what is Your ajna?” Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa. Bas. Everything is there in the Bhagavad gita. You simply repeat. That’s all. You become guru. To become a guru is not difficult job. Follow Caitanya Mahaprabhu and speak what Krsna has said. Bas. You become guru. “  
(Bombay, April 15, 1977)

Note:

1. In the above quote, Srila Prabhupada renders the term amara ajnaya (“on my order”) as “What I say, you do.” This is significant considering the misinterpretation of the RtVik-vadis that “on my order” means “only when I order.” Srila Prabhupada interprets otherwise. He even says what the order is: “And what is Your ajna? Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa. Bas. Everything is there in the Bhagavad gita. You simply repeat. That’s all.”
2. Someone might imagine that the guru, who is being referred to in the above quote, is a siksa guru and not a diksa guru. However, Srila Prabhupada has clarified the topic by using the expressions: “Why you are not? You are my disciples... Like father, like son.” Srila Prabhupada, quoting the latter English proverb, refers to himself as the father and his (diksa) disciples as his sons. Srila Prabhupada, being the diksa guru. for his disciples, says “like father, like son” which shows that he is referring to his disciples as future diksa gurus.



## 5 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's statements that it is not difficult to become a spiritual master

*"Lord Caitanya says: 'Every one of you become the spiritual master, every one of you. Why one, two? Every one of you.' 'Oh, spiritual master is very difficult job.' No. No difficult job. Caitanya Maha... amara ajnaya: Just try to carry out My order. That's all. Then you become spiritual master." (Columbus, May 9, 1969)*

## 6 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's statement that non-liberated devotees who strictly follow the parampara are still qualified to act as diksa-gurus

*"A person who is liberated acarya and guru cannot commit any mistake, but there are persons who are less qualified or not liberated, but still can act as guru and acarya by strictly following the discipic succession." (New York, 26 April, 1968)*

*"There are so many qualification. But one may not have all these qualifications. He may be rascal number one, but still, he can become spiritual master. How? Amara ajnaya. As Krsna says, as Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, if you follow, then you become spiritual master. One may be rascal number one from material estimation, but if he simply strictly follows whatever is said by Caitanya Mahaprabhu or His representative spiritual master, then he becomes a guru. So it is not very difficult. One may not think that 'I am not qualified to become guru.' No, you are qualified if you follow strictly the parampara system. Then you are qualified. That's all." (London, August 22, 1973)*

## 7 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's usage of the imperative (and thus his emphasis) in regard to his disciples becoming spiritual masters in the future

In the following quotes, Srila Prabhupada uses the imperative "should" twice.

*"I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary work. At the same time, I shall request them all to become spiritual master. Every one of you should be spiritual master next." (Hamburg, September 5, 1969)*

*"From a bona fide spiritual master you receive knowledge, because he will present as he has received from his spiritual master. He'll not adulterate or manufacture something. That is the bona fide spiritual master. And that is very easy. To become spiritual master is not very difficult thing. You'll have to become spiritual master. You, all my disciples, everyone should become spiritual master. It is not difficult. It is difficult when you manufacture something. But if you simply present whatever you have heard from your spiritual master, it is very easy." (London, August 22, 1973)*

## 8 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's expression "You don't require large definition"

*"...guru means faithful servant of God, simple. You don't require large definition, what is guru. So Vedic knowledge gives you indication that tad-vijnanartham. If you want to know the science of spiritual life, tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet, you must approach guru. And who is guru? Guru means who is the faithful servant of God. Very simple. (Srila Prabhupada's lecture 12 July, 1975)*

## 9 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's emphatic desire that his disciples function as initiating spiritual masters after his physical departure

*"So far designation is concerned, the spiritual master authorizes every one of his disciple. But it is up to the disciple to carry out the order, able to carry out or not. It is not that spiritual master is partial he designates one and rejects other. He may do that. If the other is not qualified, he can do that. But actually his intention is not like that. He wants that each and every one of his disciple become as powerful as he is or more than that. That is his desire. Just like father wants*





# 100 गुरु वैचित्र्य

*every son to be as qualified or more qualified than the father. But it is up to the student or to the son to raise himself to that standard.” (San Diego, June 29, 1972)*

## 10 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada’s teaching that only out of etiquette should a disciple not initiate in the physical presence of the spiritual master

*“Everyone can, whoever is initiated, he is competent to make disciples. But as a matter of etiquette they do not do so in the presence of their spiritual master. This is the etiquette. Otherwise, they are competent. They can make disciples and spread... they are competent to make disciples.” (Detroit, July 18, 1971)*

*“Every student is expected to become Acarya. Acarya means one who knows the scriptural injunctions and follows them practically in life, and teaches them to his disciples... Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bona fide Guru, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bona fide Spiritual Master and spread Krishna consciousness very widely, that will make me and Krishna very happy.” (New Delhi, 2 December, 1975)*

## 11 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada’s explanation that anyone who can control the six urges is fit to make disciples all over the world

*“So Rupa Goswami says who can be a spiritual master. So he has given specifically this definition, that one who has got controls over the tongue, over the speech, over the mind, over the belly, and over the genitals, and over the anger. If anyone has control over these six things, then he can become spiritual master. Prthivim sa sisyat: ‘He is allowed to make disciples all over the world.’ Otherwise not.” (Montreal, July 9, 1968)*

## 12 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada’s teaching that one must physically approach a living guru (vapuh) in order to understand spiritual teachings (vani)

*“...it is said, tene brahma hrda adi-kavaye, hrda: “through the heart.” Because Krsna is situated in everyone’s heart. Actually, He is the spiritual master, caitya guru. So in order to help us, He comes out as physical spiritual master. And therefore saksad dharitvena sama... Spiritual master is representative of Krsna. Krsna sends some sincere devotee to act on His behalf, and therefore he is sprntual master. So this is the parampara system.” (Rome, May 28, 1974)*

*“...God is called caitya guru, the spiritual master within the heart. And the physical spiritual master is God’s mercy. If God sees that you are sincere, He will give you a spiritual master who can give you protection. He will help you from within and without, without in the physical form of spiritual master, and within as the spiritual master within the heart.” (Rome, May 23, 1974)*

*“Krsna is the first spiritual master, and when we become more interested, then we have to go to a physical spiritual master. That is enjoined in the next verse.*

*tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya  
upadeksyanti te jnanam jnaninas tattva-darsinah*

*Now, Krsna advises that ‘If you want to know that transcendental science, then you just try to approach somebody.’ Pranipatena. Pranipatena, pariprasnena and sevaya. What is pranipata? Pranipata means surrender. Surrender. You must select a person where you can surrender yourself because nobody likes to surrender to anyone. We have got...*

*...There is regular propaganda that ‘For spiritual realization there is no need of spiritual master.’ But so far Vedic literature is concerned, so far Bhagavad gita is concerned, so far Bhagavata is concerned, so far the Upanisads and Vedic literatures are concerned, they do not say. They*





say that there is need of a spiritual master. Take for example the Upanisads, the Vedic Upanisads. In the Vedic Upanisads it is said, *tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet, srotriyam brahma-nistham*, this mantra, that 'If you want to learn that transcendental subject, then...' First word is that if you are eager to learn that subject. In the material world also, suppose if I want to learn the art of music. Then I have to find out somebody who is a musician. Without having the association of a musician, nobody can learn the art of music.

Or any art. Suppose if you want to become an engineer. So you have to enter yourself in an engineering college or technical college and learn there. Nobody can become a medical practitioner simply by purchasing book from the market and reading at home. That is not possible. You have to admit yourself in a medical college and undergo training and practical examination, so many things. Simply by purchasing book, it is not possible. Similarly, if you want to learn Bhagavad-gita or any transcendental subject matter, here is the instruction by Lord Krsna Himself. Lord Krsna Himself, because He is the speaker of this Bhagavad gita, He says that *tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*. You must go to a person where you can surrender yourself. That means you have to check, 'Who is the real person who can give me instruction on Bhagavad gita or any Vedic literature, or any scripture, right?' And not that, to search out a person as a, whimsically.

...Not only surrender, not blindly surrender. You must be able to inquire. *Pariprasna*. The next qualification is *pariprasna*. *Pariprasna* means inquiry. Without inquiry, you cannot make advance. Just like a student in the school who inquires from the teacher, he's very intelligent. Even a boy, a child, if he inquires from the father, 'Oh, father, what is this? What is this?' that child is very intelligent. Very intelligent. So inquiry is required, not only *pranipata*... 'Oh, I have found out a very good spiritual master, very learned and very good, saw. All right. I have surrendered. Then all my business finished.' No. That is not... You may have a very good spiritual master, but if you have no power to inquire, then you cannot make progress.

Inquiries must be there. But inquiry, how inquiry? Not to challenge. Inquiry, not that 'Oh, I shall see what kind of spiritual master he is. Let me challenge him and put some irrelevant questions and talk nonsensically, this way and that way.' Oh, that will not make... Inquiry on the point. *Pariprasna* means inquiry on the point, and that inquiry should be *sewa*. *Seva* means service. Not that 'Oh, I have inquired so many things from such and such person. Oh, I have not rendered any payment or any service, so I have gained.' No. Without service, your inquiry will be futile. So three things here." (New York, August 12, 1966)

"The guru must come through the parampara system. Then he is bona fide. Otherwise he is a rascal. Must come through the parampara system, and in order to understand *tad-vijnanam*, transcendental science, you have to approach guru. You cannot say that 'I can understand at home.' No. That is not possible. That is the injunction of the all sastra. " (Hyderabad, August 19, 197)

"By reading you cannot understand. *Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet*. That is also *vidhilin*: In order to understand that science, he must go to guru. " (January 8, 1977, Bombay)

## 13 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's "secret of success" in spiritual life

"So how everyone can become a spiritual master? A spiritual master must have sufficient knowledge, so many other qualifications. No. Even without any qualifications, one can become a spiritual master. How? Now the process is, Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya*: 'On My order.' That is the crucial point. One does not become spiritual master by his own whims. That is not spiritual master. He must be ordered by superior authority. Then he's spiritual master. *Amara ajnaya*. Just like in our case. Our superior authority, our spiritual master, he ordered me that 'You just try to preach this gospel, whatever you have learned from me, in English.' So we have tried it. That's all. It is not that I am very much qualified. The only qualification is that I have



# 100 deviations

*tried to execute the order of superior authority. That's all. This is the secret of success.” (London, August 3, 1973)*

*“Our process is evam, parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh. Parampara. What Krsna said, the disciplic succession will say the same thing. But they are speaking differently. So therefore we don't take them as bona fide. They are not bona fide.” (Paris, August 13, 1973)*

## 14 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's purport to the kiba vipra kiba nyasi verse and offering an interpretation that is directly opposed to Srila Prabhupada's own explanation

In trying to disregard the repeated instructions of Srila Prabhupada and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to become a guru, RtVik proponents present a blanket interpretation that whenever this instruction is given it cannot refer to diksa guru but only to siksa guru. In the following purport, Srila Prabhupada quotes his own spiritual master, who directly refutes the claim that the order to become guru cannot refer to diksa guru:

*“Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura also states that although one is situated as a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, brahmacari, vanaprastha, grhastha or sannyasi, if he is conversant in the science of Krsna he can become a spiritual master as vartma-pradarsaka-guru, diksa-guru or siksa-guru. The spiritual master who first gives information about spiritual life is called the vartma-pradarsaka guru, the spiritual master who initiates according to the regulations of the sastras is called the diksa-guru, and the spiritual master who gives instructions for elevation is called the siksa-guru...*

*kiba vipra, kiba nyasi, sudra kene naya  
yei krsna-tattva-vetta, sei 'guru' haya*

*The word guru is equally applicable to the vartma-pradarsaka guru, siksa-guru and diksa-guru. Unless we accept the principle enunciated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, this Krsna consciousness movement cannot spread all over the world. According to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's intentions, prthivite ache yata nagaradi-grama sarvatra pracara haibe mora nama. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's cult must be preached all over the world.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila 8.128p)*

## 15 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's interest in preparing spiritual masters

*“Every student is expected to become Acarya. Acarya means one who knows the scriptural injunctions and follows them practically in life, and teaches them to his disciples... Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bona fide Guru, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bona fide Spiritual Master and spread Krishna consciousness very widely, that will make me and Krishna very happy.” (New Delhi, 2 December, 1975)*

*“Evam parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh. So we have to follow the acarya. Then, when we are completely, cent per cent follower of acarya, then you can also act as acarya. This is the process. Don't become premature acarya. First of all follow the orders of acarya, and you become mature. Then it is better to become acarya. Because we are interested in preparing acarya, but the etiquette is, at least for the period the guru is present, one should not become acarya.” (Mayapura, April 6, 1975)*

## 16 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's mission that his followers become gurus

*“By My command you become a guru and save this land. This was also the mission of my guru-maharaj and it is my mission. You will perfect your life if you make it also your mission.” (New Delhi, 1 September, 1976)*



## 17 Disregarding that the guru's desire and order are the same

Sometimes it is falsely claimed by some RtVik-vadis that Srila Prabhupada did not "order" that his disciples should initiate after his departure.

Actually, Srila Prabhupada did request his disciples to be gurus.

*"That is my request to you, that you should take this chance and become a spiritual master for all the people." (New York, July 29, 1966)*

*"I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary work. At the same time, I shall request them all to become spiritual master. Every one of you should be spiritual master next." (Hamburg, September 5, 1969)*

*"You'll have to become spiritual master. You, all my disciples, everyone should become spiritual master." (London, August 22, 1973)*

Srila Prabhupada used the terms request and order (also ask, plead) synonymously in the context of a guru requesting his disciple(s). Here are some quotations:

"Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, the guru., request ing/ordering his disciples to form a GBC:

*"My Guru Maharaja used to lament many times for this reason and he thought if one man at least had understood the principle of preaching then his mission would achieve success... Still he requested his disciples to form a strong Governing body for preaching the cult of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He never recommended anyone to be acarya of the Gaudiya Math. But Sridhara Maharaja is responsible for disobeying this order of Guru Maharaja, and he and others who are already dead unnecessarily thought that there must be one acarya." (Letter to Rupanuga: 74-04-28)*

Parasurama, the guru, asking/ordering Bhismadeva to marry Amba:

*"When Bhisma refused to marry Amba, who wanted him to become her husband, Amba met Parasurama, and by her request only, he asked Bhismadeva to accept her as his wife. Bhisma refused to obey his order, although he was one of the spiritual masters of Bhismadeva." (Sritmad-Bhagavatam 1.9.6-7p)*

Brahma, father and guru, requesting/ordering Narada Muni to preach:

*"Narada is therefore requested or ordered by his spiritual master to present this science with determination and in good plan. Narada was never advised to preach the principles of Bhagavatam to earn a livelihood; he was ordered by his spiritual master to take the matter very seriously in a missionary spirit." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.7.53p)*

Brahma, requesting/ordering the Kumaras to become grhasthas:

*"The Four sons of Brahma, the Kumaras, declined to become family men even on the request of their great father, Brahma. Those who are serious about gaining release from material bondage should not be entangled in the false relationship of family bondage. People may ask how the Kumaras could refuse the orders of Brahma, who was their father and above all the creator of the universe." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.12.5p)*

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, the guru, requesting/ordering Srila Prabhupada to preach:

*"Once we had the opportunity to meet Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja, and on first sight he requested this humble self to preach his message in the Western countries. There was no preparation for this, but somehow or other he desired it, and by his grace we are now engaged in executing his order, which has given us a transcendental occupation and has saved and liberated us from the occupation of material activities." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.22.5p)*

Brahma, requesting/ordering the Kumaras to become grhasthas:

*"When the Kumaras were born out of the body of Lord Brahma, they were requesting to get married and increase the population. In the beginning of the creation there was a great need of population; therefore Lord Brahma was creating one son after another and ordering them to increase." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.22.G, purport)*



# 100 Deviations

Lord Krsna requesting/ordering/pleading to Satrajit to give his jewel to King Ugrasena:

*“Krsna pleaded that the best should be offered to the king. But Satrajit, being a worshiper of the demigods, had become too materialistic and, instead of accepting the request of Krsna, thought it wiser to worship the jewel to get the 170 pounds of gold every day... But Satrajit refused to abide by the order of Krsna and did not deliver the jewel.” (Krsna Book, Ch. 55)*

Lord Krsna requesting/ordering Sahadeva (the son of Jarasandha) to honor the kings:

*“Lord Krsna requested Sahadeva, the son of King Jarasandha, to supply all necessities to the kings and show them all respect and honor. In pursuance of the order of Lord Krsna, Sahadeva offered them all honor and presented them with ornaments, garments, garlands and other paraphernalia.” (Krsna Book, Ch. 72)*

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, the guru, requesting/ordering/instructing his disciples to form a GBC:

*“One party strictly followed the instructions of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, but another group created their own concoction about executing his desires. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, at the time of his departure, requesting all his disciples to form a governing body and conduct missionary activities cooperatively. He did not instruct a particular man to become the next acarya. But just after his passing away, his leading secretaries made plans, without authority, to occupy the post of acarya, and they split in two factions over who the next acarya would be. Consequently, both factions were asara, or useless, because they had no authority, having disobeyed the order of the spiritual master. Despite the spiritual master’s order to form a governing body and execute the missionary activities of the Gaudiya Matha, the two unauthorized factions began litigation that is still going on after forty years with no decision.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila 12.8, purport)*

Lord Caitanya requesting/ordering Gadadhara Pandita to go to Puri:

*“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu requested Gadadhara Pandita to go to Nilacala, Jagannatha Puri, but he did not abide by this order.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila 16, chapter summary)*

The first-class disciple fulfills the desire of his guru even without being ordered; the second class disciple fulfills only the order of the guru but he is not able to understand the desire of the guru; the third class disciple does not fulfill the order of the guru, even after being instructed. Srila Prabhupada himself did not stress the difference between fulfilling the order and fulfilling the desires of the guru or the Lord. It is simply not a part of Srila Prabhupada’s usage of the language.

*“This is perfect conclusion, that ‘I shall execute the desire of Krsna.’ But Krsna is not physically present before me. Then how I shall know what Krsna desires?’ That is not very difficult. Krsna’s representative is there, the spiritual master. If you fulfill the desire of the spiritual master, then you fulfill the desire of Krsna. Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada. That is stated by Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura. If you please your spiritual master, then you know that ‘I have pleased Krsna.’ Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada yasya prasada na gatih kuto ‘pi: ‘If you displease your spiritual master, then you are nowhere. Your position is lost.’ Therefore, yesterday we were explaining the ten kinds of offenses. Out of ten kinds of offenses, the serious offence is guror avajna, disobedience of the order of guru. This is the verdict of the sastra.” (Srila Prabhupada’s lecture, Mayapura, 28 October 1974)*

Srila Prabhupada first instructs us that by fulfilling the desire of the spiritual master, we please Krsna.

Then he mentions the converse of that. Next he says “therefore” and then talks about disobedience of the “order of the guru”. He says that by not fulfilling the desire of guru one cannot be pleasing the guru, which he further equates with the disobedience of the order of the guru.

Here is another instance of a similar usage by Srila Prabhupada:

*“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu wanted to spread the bhakti cult all over the world (prthivite ache yata nagaradi grama). Therefore devotees in the line of Krsna consciousness must go to different*





# 100 गुरु वैचल्येन

*parts of the world and preach, as ordered by the spiritual master. That will satisfy Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Antya-līla 4.144)*

Here Srila Prabhupada first says that Lord Caitanya “wanted” to spread the bhakti cult all over the world. This is a statement of the Lord’s desire. Then he says “therefore” that devotees “must” go and preach. This is a statement of order. The word “therefore” is significant because the order is consequential to the desire.

To settle the argument whether Srila Prabhupada thought his disciples competent or not to initiate, here is some enlightenment from His Divine Grace:

*“Everyone can, whoever is initiated, he is competent to make disciples. But as a matter of etiquette they do not do so in the presence of their spiritual master. This is the etiquette. Otherwise, they are competent. They can make disciples and spread they are competent to make disciples.” (Detroit, July 18, 1971)*

Please note that Srila Prabhupada stated this as early as 1971. Some argue that Srila Prabhupada’s siksa in the form of his teachings is available to anyone and that alone is sufficient. But Srila Prabhupada teaches us that mere siksa from an acarya (who is non-manifest to our physical sense perception), or even from the Supreme Personality of Godhead (whose direct sac-cid-ananda-vigraha is also non-manifest to our physical sense perception) is not enough. You require to “approach” a personal spiritual master.

*“One must approach. Sanatana Gosvami’s teaching us the Vaisnava principle that one should approach a proper spiritual master. So he’s approaching Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So one may argue that ‘Where is Caitanya Mahaprabhu now? Where is Kṛṣṇa now?’ It doesn’t matter. Kṛṣṇa’s words are there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s words are there. Instructions are there. So if we follow the direction and instruction of Caitanya Mahaprabhu or Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of a superior, bona fide spiritual master, then we associate with Kṛṣṇa or Caitanya Mahaprabhu without any deviation.” (Vṛndavana, October 19, 1972).*

## 18 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada’s simple definition of a guru

*“Even though you see that he is materially born, his behavior is like other men. But because he says the same truth as it is spoken in the Vedas or by the Personality of Godhead, therefore he is guru. Because he does not make any change whimsically, therefore he is guru. That is the definition. It is very simple.” (Hyderabad, August 19, 1976)*

## 19 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada’s explicit final orders regarding initiations after his physical departure

*“When I order, “You become guru; “ he becomes regular guru. That’s all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. That’s it.” (Vṛndavana, May 28, 1977)*

*“And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, amara ajnaya guru hana. One can understand the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he can become guru. Or one who understands his guru’s order, the same parampara, he can become guru. And therefore I shall select some of you.” (Vṛndavana, May 28, 1977)*

## 20 Misinterpreting Srila Prabhupada’s expression “spiritual master” to mean siksa-guru not diksa-guru

*“Anyone following the order of Lord Caitanya under the guidance of His bonafide representative, can become a spiritual master and I wish that in my absence all my disciples become the bonafide spiritual master to spread Krishna Consciousness throughout the whole world.” (Srila Prabhupada’s letter to Madhusudana, 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 1967)*

*RtVik-vadis try to discredit the above quote saying that Srila Prabhupada meant siksa guru, not diksa guru. This argument is proven wrong by the fact that Srila Prabhupada says “in my absence”-that is after his physical disappearance. His disciples were already acting as siksa gurus, as preachers. “I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary*





# 100 deviations

*work. At the same time I shall request them all to become spiritual masters. Every one of you should be spiritual master next.” (Hamburg, Sept 5, 1969)*

Note that Srila Prabhupada says “next.” That means his disciples should succeed him as diksa gurus. If he were merely referring to his disciples becoming siksa gurus, as the RtVik-vadis claim, the use of the term “next” becomes redundant, as they were already acting as siksa gurus.

## 21 Ridiculing the multiple guru system Srila Prabhupada wanted

Srila Prabhupada wanted many initiating gurus in ISKCON, after his departure. RtVik-mayavadis, in slight of Srila Prabhupada’s direct orders, disparagingly and misleadingly refer to the system our Founder-Acarya wanted as M.A.S.S. (Multiple Acarya Successor System). But let Srila Prabhupada speak for himself on what he wanted. The following excerpt is from the lecture Srila Prabhupada gave in Mayapura on 16 April 1975. Present were the GBC, many Temple Presidents and sannyasis, and a good percentage of ISKCON’s total membership.

**Prabhupada:** *So we have to follow the acarya. Then, when we are completely, cent per cent follower of acarya, then you can also act as acarya. This is the process. Don’t become premature acarya. First of all follow the orders of acarya, and you become mature. Then it is better to become acarya. Because we are interested in preparing acarya, but the etiquette is, at least for the period the guru is present, one should not become acarya. Even if he is complete, he should not because the etiquette is if somebody comes for becoming initiated it is the duty of such person to bring that prospective candidate to his acarya, not that “Now people are coming to me, so I can become acarya. “ That is avamanya. Navamanyeta karhicit. Don’t transgress this etiquette. Nava-manyeta. That will be fall down. Just like during the lifetime of our Guru Maharaja, all our godbrothers now who are acting as acarya, they did not do so. That a not etiquette. Acaryam mamivijaniyat na avaman... That is insult. So if you insult your acarya, then you are finished. Yasya prasaalad bhagavat-prasado yasya aprasadat no gatih kuto ‘pi-finished. If you displease your acarya, then you are finished. Therefore it is said, Caitanya Mahaprabhu says to all the acaryas... Nityananda Prabhu, Advaita Prabhu and Srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda, they are all carriers of orders of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So try to follow the path of acarya process.*

*Then life will be successful. And to become acarya is not very difficult. First of all, try to become very faithful servant of your acarya, follow strictly what he says, try to please him and spread Krsna consciousness. That’s all. It is not at all difficult. Try to follow the instruction of your Guru Maharaja and spread Krsna consciousness. That is the order of Lord Caitanya. Amara ajnaya guru hana tars ei desa, yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa: “By following My order, you become guru. “ And if we strictly follow the acarya system and try our best to spread the instruction of Krsna... Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa. There are two kinds of krsna-upadesa. Upadesa means instruction. Instruction given by Krsna, that is also k,rsna-upadesa, and instruction received about Krsna, that is also ‘krsna’-upadesa. Krsnasya upadesa iti krsna upadesa. Samasa, sasti-tat-purusa-samasa. And Krsna visaya upadesa, that is also Krsna upadesa. Bahu-vrihi-samasa. This is the way of analyzing Sanskrit grammar. So Krsna’s upadesa is Bhagavad gita. He’s directly giving instruction. So one who is spreading Krsna-upadesa, simply repeat what is said by Krsna, then you become acarya. Not difficult at all. Everything is stated there. We have to simply repeat like parrot. Not exactly parrot. Parrot does not understand the meaning; he simply vibrates. But you should understand the meaning also; otherwise how you can explain? So, so we want to spread Krsna consciousness. Simply prepare yourself how to repeat Krsna’s instructions very nicely, without any malinterpretation. Then, in future... Suppose you have got now ten thousand. We shall expand to hundred thousand. That is required. Then hundred thousand to million, and million to ten million.*

**Devotees:** *Jaya!*

**Prabhupada:** *So there will be no scarcity of acarya, and people will understand Krsna consciousness very easily. So make that organization.*



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

*So here is Srila Prabhupada's direct instruction: "make that organization", an organization where "there will be no scarcity of acarya".*

## 2. Six Principles of RtVik-Maya-Vada by Jayapataka Swami

### 22 Principle 1: RtVik-maya-vada

"Maya" means that which is not. The post samadhi, RtVik concoction was not ordered by Srila Prabhupada, was never discussed by Srila Prabhupada, and was not desired by Srila Prabhupada in any of his communications or writings to devotees. Therefore the RtVik doctrine is simply a maya or vada or theory, so it is quite befitting they be called RtVik-maya-vadis.

**Explanation:** Srila Prabhupada regularly and consistently described the guru-parampara system whereby, after the physical departure of the spiritual master, disciples would continue the parampara by also accepting disciples. Srila Prabhupada never discussed any other system of parampara. In his presence, due to logistical considerations, sometimes he would have devotees chant on beads or perform certain parts of the initiation process on his behalf. In 1977, when Srila Prabhupada was extremely ill and preparing to leave the world, he also designated some devotees to choose the names and performs the initiation ceremony on his behalf. On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1977, Srila Prabhupada said that giving initiation on his behalf was merely a formality, because in the presence of the guru one should not initiate disciples. Nowhere did Srila Prabhupada ever say that this system should continue after his physical departure.

### 23 Principle 2: RtVik-maya-vadi vaignava-aparadhi (RtVik-maya vadis are offenders of Vaisnavas)

Just as the impersonalist mayavadys criticize the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a routine affair in the propagation of their unbonafide doctrine, the RtVik-maya-vadis regularly criticize Vaisnavas. Associating with RtVik-mayavadis is dangerous as one will have the spiritual creeper destroyed by mad elephant vaignava-aparadhas. Therefore one should not listen to or associate with RtVik-maya-vadis.

**Explanation:** Due to a lack of any positive reference in sadhu sastra and guru for the system of post-samadhi, RtVik initiations, the RtVik-mayavadis try to demoralize followers of the Vedic parampara-system by rejoicing in telling about any real or imagined defects in the Vaisnavas. The more the current ISKCON Vaisnavas or contemporary Gaudiya Vaisnavas can be criticized, and real or imagined defects broadcasted, they feel that somehow this will legitimize their concoction that Srila Prabhupada should continue to be the initiating guru, although he never expressed such a desire. It seems that the RtVik-mayavadis could use this ploy by default to discredit all other Vaisnavas from acting as a spiritual master, so that the only one left to do so is Srila Prabhupada. But this drives people out of ISKCON to other groups, that may appear to have a Vaisnava with exalted qualities. The RtVik-maya-vadis ignore all the wonderful preaching achievements and the strict adherence to Srila Prabhupada's instructions of the many ISKCON preachers. One of their main tactics is to destroy the faith of innocent devotees in the ISKCON guru-system, so that they can plant the seed of the RtVik poison.

### 24 Principle 3: RtVik-maya-vadi-bhasya sunile guru-bhakti sarve-nasa (If you listen to the words of the RtVik-maya-vadis you will lose your guru-bhakti, your devotion to your spiritual master)

As Lord Caitanya cautioned His followers not to listen to the words of the impersonalist mayavadis because it would destroy their devotion to the Supreme Lord, similarly devotees are cautioned not to



# 100 RTVik deviations

listen to the RtVik-maya-vadis as listening to them can destroy one's faith and devotion to the spiritual master.

**Explanation:** Srila Prabhupada has explained that even Uttama-adhikari devotees, if they hear the discourses of Sankarcarya or impersonalism, can become bewildered and fall down from the platform of devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Practically it is seen that even faithful devotees of Srila Prabhupada can become bewildered when listening to the concoctions presented in the word jugglery of the RtVik proponents, which is very expertly presented in a systematic way, so that the devotion to the spiritual master and the instructions of Srila Prabhupada become convoluted and confused. In this way the RtVik-vadis become offenders to Srila Prabhupada and the guru-parampara.

It is said that the grand-disciples, although they have a direct siksa relationship with Srila Prabhupada as the Founder-Acarya of ISKCON, also, according to Srila Prabhupada's instructions, should serve under the direct guidance of the diksa and siksa gurus in ISKCON. However, exposed to the RtVik concocted maya presentations, they think they are directly initiated disciples of Srila Prabhupada. Although Srila Prabhupada wanted to have spiritual grandchildren who would be disciples of his disciples, they are disobeying Srila Prabhupada's order and thus offending Srila Prabhupada by rejecting their bonafide spiritual master. They are also committing the offense of improper rejection of the spiritual master. Therefore, listening to or reading the RtVik concocted theories is very dangerous for those who want to maintain devotion to the spiritual master intact.

## 25 Principle 4: Nahi nahi raksati dukrn-karane, bhaja govindam bhaja govindam govindam bhaja mudha-mate... (or) Tarka rahu dur (The RtVik-maya-vada cannot, through its complicated arguments and logic, cover the correct teachings of sadhu, sastra and guru)

RtVik-maya-vadis cover the real truth with complicated and often misapplied logic and arguments ignoring direct scriptural references and orders of Srila Prabhupada as well as examples of previous acaryas.

**Explanation:** Vedic scriptures are the basis of everything. Srila Prabhupada has repeatedly recited the verse, sruti-smṛti-puranadi-pancaratra-vidhim vina aikantiki harer bhaktir utpatayaiva kalpate-“Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the Upanisads, Puranas and Narada-pancaratra is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society.”

Everything in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has to be according to sastra. Although there is no direct reference to a posthumous initiation system anywhere in sastra, RtViks misuse logic by asking such questions: “Where is it prohibited in sastra to have such post-samadhi initiations?” This tricky kind of questioning misleads the innocent people. In this way one could ask so many questions like, where is it prohibited to

offer Jhulan-yatra on a bungee-cord? Nobody would think of throwing Radha-Kṛṣṇa Deities off a bridge on a bungee-cord, even though it is not prohibited in sastra. Since no one would ever conceive of doing such a crazy thing, the question of prohibiting it doesn't even come up. There is an established system that sastra prescribes on how to do Jhulan-yatra, and therefore it is done in that way. Similarly, in sastra it is described how the guru-parampara, generation after generation, goes on. The question of prohibiting various other types of concocted ways that one might conceive of or manufacture for continuing the disciplic succession doesn't arise, since the Vedas rather present the positive way to do things. By default, everything that is not authorized by the Vedas is not acceptable.

Similarly, Srila Prabhupada never said he wanted to continue to initiate people after his physical departure. Rather he always said he wanted his disciples to do that. Yet RtVik-maya-vadis will create some illusion saying: “Where did Srila Prabhupada say he didn't want to initiate after his departure?” or any other combination of tricky word jugglery. Moreover, according to Srila Prabhupada,



what previous acaryas have done is also important evidence for us. We have seen that since time immemorial when the spiritual master physically departs, then one or more of his disciples take up the responsibility of initiating and accepting disciples. Nowhere in any Vedic disciplic succession has a system of post-samadhi RtVik initiations ever been applied. However, through the intricate use of tricky, concocted arguments, the, RtViks are trying to disprove the Vedic system, which by its very definition, discredits the RtVik system.

“Even most people who claim to belong to the Vedic system of religion are actually opposed to the Vedic principles. Every day they manufacture a new type of dharma on the plea that whatever one manufactures is also a path of liberation. Atheistic men generally say, yata mate tata patha. According to this view, there are hundreds and thousands of different opinions in human society, and each opinion is a valid religious principle. This philosophy of rascals has killed the religious principles mentioned in the Vedas, and such philosophies will become increasingly influential as Kali-yoga progresses.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.8.19p)

## 26 Principle 5: RtVik-maya-vadis want Srila Prabhupada to personally suffer for all the world's sins.

RtVik-maya-vadis state that all people should be initiated on behalf of Srila Prabhupada and that he must accept everyone's sins for the next ten thousand years, or as long as ISKCON exists, although Srila Prabhupada never said he would accept everyone's sins in this way.

**Explanation:** It is well documented in the Vedas that the spiritual master accepts the reactions of his disciples' karma. Therefore scripture cautions against accepting too many unqualified disciples. However, unless the RtVik initiators shall be responsible for any karma; all the karma will be accepted by Srila Prabhupada, who for all time, as long as ISKCON exists, must accept all the karma of all the initiates. In effect they want to bring Srila Prabhupada back down to take birth again and again in this material world until everyone is delivered. But Srila Prabhupada never expressed the desire to take birth again and again, rather he expressed the opposite. Srila Prabhupada was the spiritual master who initiated and the disciples must serve and assist the spiritual master and the previous acaryas. The RtVik-mayavadis want to replace this system perpetually, giving all the burden to Srila Prabhupada, who is no longer here to say yes or no whether he wants to accept. Therefore the disciples will have to always remain in doubt whether actually they were accepted or not. In fact, there is no doubt that they will not be accepted, since Srila Prabhupada has never given such a system. RtVik-maya-vadis will say that in Srila Prabhupada's presence he had devotees, in the last four months, initiate on his behalf, and that this system were never meant to stop after his disappearance, but the actual meaning of a RtVik is someone who is an assisting priest, who is assisting the acarya in the performance of yajna. RtVik is not a permanent position. No RtVik ever continues to act once the acarya is no longer present. Although engaging an assistant to help is commonly accepted in the Vedas, the continuation of the post-samadhi initiation system is not anywhere mentioned by the Vedas or Srila Prabhupada. He never specifically said that he wanted such a thing, rather he said the opposite. He wanted grand-disciples, disciples of his disciples. He wanted many branches of the disciplic succession coming from him to expand through ISKCON.

## 27 Principle 6: RtVik-maya vadis jump over the guru

To jump over one's own spiritual master and declare oneself the initiated direct disciple of a previous acarya and dishonor one's relationship with the spiritual master is an excommunicable offense.

**Explanation:** Viracandra Prabhu, the incarnation of Lord Ksirodakasayi Visnu and son of Lord Nityananda Prabhu, excommunicated Jaya-gopala (of Kandra, West Bengal) for committing this offense. In 1970 the 4 sannyasis in New Vrindavana claimed that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura was the real initiator or guru and Srila Prabhupada was only acting on his behalf, and then they started to think about it and said that if Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura is the real guru, then why not Bhaktivinoda Thakura, and if Bhaktivinoda Thakura, then why not Rupa Gosvami or why not Lord Caitanya or Krsna. Actually everybody is guru on behalf of Krsna, so that means that



# 100 deviations

actually everybody is Krsna's disciple. And then, somehow, they began to think that since Srila Prabhupada is acting on behalf of Krsna directly, he is Krsna Himself, and they started preaching that Srila Prabhupada was Krsna. So they went from the RtVik concept to a total impersonalist mayavada concept. This basic problem is called jumping over the guru. If you can jump over one generation of the disciplic succession you can jump over so many. If devotees can accept Srila Prabhupada as their direct diksa guru, after his samadhi, then similarly one could accept any guru in the line.

Of course this does not mean that someone cannot be inspired by Srila Prabhupada and be getting mercy directly from Srila Prabhupada. Every member of ISKCON achieves that, but the actual service connection in the guru-parampara occurs through the spiritual masters, who are physically present in the formal sense.

## 3. Disregard of the May 28 Conversation

28. Negating the importance of it

29. Trying to dismiss it by calling it an "old taped conversation"

30. Misinterpreting Srila Prabhupada's clear statements

31. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada's usage of the expression "officiating acarya"

32. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada usage of the term "rtvik"

33. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada's expression "regular guru"

34. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada's expression "disciple of my disciple"

35. Disregard of Srila Prabhupada's expression "granddisciple"

36. Imagining words never spoken

37. Trying to discard the validity of the tape-recording

38. Inventing a conspiracy saying the GBC tried to cover Srila Prabhupada's desire to establish a posthumous-RtVik system

39. Disregarding the GBC minutes of the conversation

40. Disregard of the testimony of the direct witnesses

41. Disregarding the rules of linguistics

The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation is the final order about continuing the disciplic succession, spoken directly by Srila Prabhupada.

In May 1977, Srila Prabhupada fell seriously ill and requested that all the GBC members come and visit him in Vrndavana to insure the continuation of the ISKCON institution.

Satsvarupa dasa Goswami writes in Srila Prabhupada's Lilamrta:

*"The GBC men met and decided that aside from Prabhupada's will, which would secure the ISKCON properties, and aside from making all the bank accounts within ISKCON secure, there were also a few questions which they should put before Prabhupada before it was too late. These questions, such as how future disciples would be initiated, would have to be answered; otherwise they would become a source of speculation and havoc after Srila Prabhupada's departure."*

Meetings were held over two days, May 27 and May 28. Most of the discussions that took place concerned the securing of ISKCON properties and other legal matters that suddenly became more immediately relevant with the impending departure of His Divine Grace.





# 100 Deviations

Minutes from the morning session of the meeting of the Governing Body Commission of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, held in Vrndavana, India, on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 1977: 17 members in attendance plus Giriraja Dasa [as per the recorded signatures of the members in attendance]:

Satsvarupa dasa Goswami;	Pancadravida Swami;	Jayatirtha Dasa;
Ramesvara dasa Swami;	Gopala Krsna Dasa;	Atreya Rsi Dasa;
Bhagavan Dasa;	Rupanuga Dasa;	Hrdayananda dasa Goswami;
Gurukrpa Swami;	Harikesa Swami;	Balimardana;
Giriraja dasa Brahmachari;	Jayapataka Swami.	Svarupa Damodara dasa Brahmachari
Balavanta dasa Adhikari;	Jagadisa Dasa;	Adi Kesava Swami;

**Resolved:** The following questions will be taken to Srila Prabhupada for his answers. They will be presented by a committee of Tamala Krsna Goswami, Satsvarupa Goswami, Jagadisa, Rupanuga, Bhagavan, Kirtanananda Swami, Balimardana.

1. How long should GBC members remain in office?
2. How can GBC members who leave be replaced?
3. In the absence of Srila Prabhupada what is the procedure for first, second, and sannyasa initiations?
4. What is the relationship of the person who gives this initiation to the person he gives it to?
5. Is there any provision for publication of other translations of Vaisnava scriptures by the BBT, after the disappearance of Srila Prabhupada?

These questions were duly asked to Srila Prabhupada before the afternoon session. His answers were recorded on tape and they were also recorded in the GBC minutes book on the next page after the above questions were written down, as follows:

For the purpose of recording information, Srila Prabhupada's answers to the above questions were given as follows:

1. GBC members shall remain permanently. If a GBC member leaves, the GBC can appoint new GBC members.
2. Srila Prabhupada said he will appoint several devotees who shall perform initiation in the future, even after his disappearance. The disciples they accept shall be their disciples and Srila Prabhupada will be their grand spiritual master.
3. New translations of Vedic works can be published in the future, even after Srila Prabhupada's departure, but they can only be done by one who is very expert. At present, Srila Prabhupada acknowledged, there are very few such men.

Why do RtVik-vadis attack the conversation? Because Srila Prabhupada clearly and unambiguously established that his disciples will be regular gurus and the disciples they accept will be their disciples. RtVik-vadis therefore try their best-unsuccessfully-to discredit the conversation as the final, official expression of Srila Prabhupada's desire on the matter.

Here is the whole conversation:

**Satsvarupa:** *Srila Prabhupada, we were all asked by the rest of the GBC to come to ask some questions. Most... These are the members of the original GBC as you first made it up. So our first question is about the GBC members. We want to know how long should they remain in office?*

**Prabhupada:** *They should remain for good.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *They should remain for good.*

**Prabhupada:** *Selected men are chosen, so they cannot be changed. Rather, if some competent man comes, he should be added. I shall recommend that Vasudeva become one of the GBC.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *Vasudeva is Deoji Punja. He's the founder of our... He's building the temple in Fiji.*

**Prabhupada:** *How many GBC's are there already?*

**Tamala Krsna:** *Twenty-three.*

**Prabhupada:** *So add him. GBC is not to be changed.*



# 100 Deviations

**Satsvarupa:** But then, in the event that some present GBC member leaves, either leaves...

**Prabhupada:** Another should be elected.

**Satsvarupa:** By the votes of the present GBC. Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted.

**Prabhupada:** Yes. I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up, I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating acaryas.

**Tamala Krsna:** Is that called ,RtVik-acarya?

**Prabhupada:** RtVik, yes.

**Satsvarupa:** Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...

**Prabhupada:** He's guru. He's guru.

**Satsvarupa:** But he does it on your behalf.

**Prabhupada:** Yes. That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become guru, so on my behalf, on my order... Amara ajnaya guru hana. Be actually guru,, but by my order.

**Satsvarupa:** So they may also be considered your disciples.

**Prabhupada:** Yes, they are discipes. Why consider? Who?

**Tamala Krsna:** No, he's asking that these ,RtVik-acaryas, they're officiating, giving diksa. Their... The people who they give diksa to, whose disciple are they?

**Prabhupada:** They're his disciple.

**Tamala Krsna:** They're his disciple.

**Prabhupada:** Who is initiating. He is granddisciple.

**Satsvarupa:** Yes.

**Tamala Krsna:** That's clear.

**Satsvarupa:** Then we have a question cancer..

**Prabhupada:** When I order, "You become guru, " he becomes regular guru. That's all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. That's it.

**Satsvarupa:** Next we have a question about the BBT. At present, no translation work is to be published without your seeing and approving it. So the question is, is there any system for publishing works in the future that you may not see? For example, we've heard suggested that the Padma Purana or the Sat-Sandarbha may be translated. But what would the system be to insure the parampara if you would not personally see these translations?

**Prabhupada:** That you have to examine expertly.

**Tamala Krsna:** In other words, there's no set principle that only the works which you have already translated can be published by the BBT. If there is some worthy translation of a bona fide Vedic reference, if it's properly done, the BBT could publish it.

**Prabhupada:** That we are doing, just like Hindi. We are doing other languages. If it is properly translated, it can be...

**Tamala Krsna:** Even if it's a work which you have not yet translated yourself.

**Prabhupada:** No, no, no, the principle is... Just like my translation, another person translating into Hindi or other languages, we are publishing. Similarly, if somebody has translated properly, it can be published. But amongst our disciples, I don't think there are many who can translate properly.

**Ramesvara:** None. We're not eager to publish anything which is not perfect, because you have already set the highest standard for the BBT. The name BBT means the highest standard right now in the world.

**Prabhupada:** That is good answer.



# 100 Deviations

**Kirtanananda:** Therefore, Srila Prabhupada, we think that you cannot leave us very soon.

**Prabhupada:** I don't want. But if I am obliged, what can I do?

**Kirtanananda:** If you don't want, Krsna will not want.

**Prabhupada:** A realized soul, must be. Otherwise, simply by imitating A-B-C-D will not help. My purports are liked by people because it is presented as practical experience. (aside:) It is within the mouth.

**Bhavananda:** I'm sorry.

**Prabhupada:** Such a nice instrument, (laughter) that it must enter into the mouth. Then it will act. That kind of instrument not required. It must remain three miles off. Our translation must be documents. They are not ordinary... One cannot become unless one is very realized. It is not A-B-C-D translation.

**Bhagavan:** It's not a matter of scholarship.

**Prabhupada:** And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, amara ajnaya guru hana. One can understand the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he can become guru. Or one who understands his guru's order, the same parampara, he can become guru. And therefore I shall select some of you. (hums)

**Satsvarupa:** That's all the questions.

**Prabhupada:** So there is no question of changing GBC.

**Satsvarupa:** No.

**Prabhupada:** Rather, one who is competent, he can be selected to act by the board of the GBC.

**Tamala Krsna:** Of course, if someone has a falldown, just like in the past some GBC men have fallen down...

**Prabhupada:** He should be replaced.

**Tamala Krsna:** Then he should be replaced. But that's a serious falldown, not some minor discrepancy.

**Prabhupada:** They must be all ideal acarya-like. In the beginning we have done for working. Now we should be very cautious. Anyone who is deviating, he can be replaced.

**Tamala Krsna:** So Srila Prabhupada, there's chanting party ready to do sankirtana. So may they come in?

**Prabhupada:** Hm.

**Tamale Krsna:** Thank you, Srila Prabhupada.

**Devotees:** Jaya Srila Prabhupada.

**Prabhupada:** Jaya. (end).

## An Analysis of the Conversation of May 28, 1977, from Disciple of My Disciple

by Badrinarayana Dasa, Giridhari Swami and Umapati Swami

The conversation:

**Satsvarupa:** Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted.

**Analysis:** Satsvarupa Maharaja's question can be taken as either one question or two. There is no doubt that the question concerns initiations after the departure of Srila Prabhupada, but it is not certain whether the question also includes the subject of initiations during Srila Prabhupada's presence. In either case, the main concern is initiations after the departure of Srila Prabhupada. Therefore Satsvarupa Maharaja says "particularly."

The hesitant wording shows that Satsvarupa Maharaja is uneasy about bringing up the subject of Srila Prabhupada's departure. The devotees were hoping against hope that Srila Prabhupada would recover, and they did not like to contemplate the idea that he might be leaving.



# 100 रत्नकै वेचनोनिइ

Satsvarupa Maharaja says “our next question” because this question was one of a list of questions that the GBC had brought before Srila Prabhupada at Srila Prabhupada’s request.

## *The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation continues:*

**Prabhupada:** *Yes. I shall recommend some of you. After this is settled up, I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating acaryas.*

**Analysis:** What is an “officiating acarya”? An officiating acarya must be a certain kind of acarya: an acarya who officiates. But he is an acarya. Srila Prabhupada does not say “priest” or “proxy.” He says “acarya. “ (The meaning of “officiate” will be taken up later.)

The word “recommend” is also important. Srila Prabhupada is not appointing acaryas. The initiations must continue, and this can only be done through Srila Prabhupada’s disciples. There is no appointment of gurus or successors, only a recommendation that certain disciples start the natural process. But a recommendation from the spiritual master is as good as an order, and the recommendation of certain devotees in the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter is a follow-up to the order that Srila Prabhupada’s disciples should take up the work of spiritual master after his departure.

Srila Prabhupada is promising to do something. He will do it in the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter, and one of the people that Srila Prabhupada is now speaking to will write that letter. How, then, can the RtVik-vadis say that the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter can be understood only without reference to this conversation? Rather, the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter begins the process Srila Prabhupada is describing here.

## *The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation continues:*

**Tamala Krsna:** *Is that called rvik-acarya?*

**Prabhupada:** *RtVik, yes.*

**Analysis:** The term “rhvik-acarya” is brought in here by Tamala Krsna Maharaja. The word “RtVik” plays a large part in the arguments of the RtVik-vadis, but their definition of the word is false. TFO says:

“RtViks, by definition, are not the initiators.”

The definition of “RtVik” in the Sanskrit dictionaries and in Srila Prabhupada’s books is not “proxy” or “non-initiator” or anything of the sort. The definition of “RtVik” is simply “priest,” and a look at Srila Prabhupada’s books will show “RtVik” defined as “priest,” or something similar, again and again. In fact, in the next passage Srila Prabhupada will say that the person called “RtVik” is the guru. Thus, Srila Prabhupada does not give any weight to the idea that “RtVik” means “proxy.” Many times Srila Prabhupada himself performed the fire sacrifice, and on those occasions, Srila Prabhupada acted both a RtVik (officiating priest) and as initiating guru but not as proxy.

Of course, a priest, may act as a proxy at times like anyone else, and in a later conversation Srila Prabhupada directs Hamsaduta to act as a proxy rtik. But one cannot disregard all the other examples of Srila Prabhupada’s use of the word and say that RtVik can be used only in this sense. In the present conversation, Srila Prabhupada does not refer to proxy initiations at all, not even in connection with the word “RtVik. “

Tamala Krsna Maharaja, however, does seem to think that “RtVik” means “proxy,” and his question shows that the GBCs were ready to accept whatever Srila Prabhupada said, even if he told them to become proxies after his leaving. In fact, it is they, not Srila Prabhupada, who bring up the idea of proxy initiation. This refutes the charge that those devotees who accepted the responsibility of guru were eagerly waiting in the wings or usurped the position.

The RtVik-vadis say that Srila Prabhupada should stop speaking at this point, although he does not. TFO says:

“Sometimes people have argued that the full answer is only properly revealed, piecemeal as it were, throughout the rest of the conversation. The problem with that proposition is that, in issuing instructions like this, Srila Prabhupada would only correctly answer the original question posed by Satsvarupa Maharaja if the following conditions were satisfied.

“a. That somebody took it upon themselves (sic) to ask more questions. &



# 100 deviations

“b. That by sheer serendipity they would happen upon the right questions to get the proper answer to Satsvarupa’s original question.”

In other words, the RtVik-vadis say that the conversation continues because the GBCs are trying to prompt Srila Prabhupada into giving them the answer they want. But Tamala Krsna Maharaja has already shown the willingness of the GBCs to accept any answer Srila Prabhupada gave. The questions continue because the disciples want clarification of their guru’s words. And at the end of the discussion, when the GBCs are ready to move on to another topic, Srila Prabhupada himself continues the discussion, offering final and definitive statements on this question.

TFO says that something is wrong if “the full answer is only properly revealed, piecemeal as it were, throughout the rest of the conversation.” But how else is knowledge revealed? Is everything revealed in Bhagavad gita 2.11? Or is “the full answer ... only properly revealed, piecemeal as it were, throughout the rest of the conversation”? Indeed, it is the duty of the disciple to ask the guru for clarification, and no one can blame him. The RtVik-vadis thus go against Srila Prabhupada’s teachings:

“Not only should one hear submissively from the spiritual master, but one must also get a clear understanding from him, in submission and service and inquiries.” (Bg 4.34p)

How casually the RtVik-vadis play with the words of Srila Prabhupada! They say that the word “henceforward” in the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter is of the utmost importance but the words of this conversation should never have been spoken, or are at best an “old taped conversation.”

Srila Prabhupada condemned such picking and choosing of the words one likes and dislikes. Srila Prabhupada’s words are the same as scripture, and to reject this conversation is the same as rejecting a chapter of Bhagavadgita.

## *The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation continues:*

**Satsvarupa:** *Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...*

**Prabhupada:** *He’s guru. He’s guru.*

**Analysis:** TFO says:

*“Sometimes the curious theory is put forward that when Srila Prabhupada says ‘he is guru,’ he is really talking about the RtViks themselves. This is clearly absurd since Srila Prabhupada has only just defined the word ,RtVik as ‘officiating acarya.’ Literally a priest who conducts some type of religious or ceremonial function.”*

The word “acarya” does not mean “priest,” so “officiating acarya” cannot literally mean “officiating priest.” Nor is the word “officiate” limited to the meaning of performing a ceremony. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, “officiate” can also mean “to perform the duties and functions of an office or a position of authority.” Literally speaking, then, “officiating acarya” can only mean “someone who performs the functions of an acarya.”

TFO mentions the word “RtVik” here, so let us see what the conversation would look like if “RtVik” were the same as “proxy.” The conversation would run like this:

**Tamala Krsna:** Is that called proxy-acarya?

**Prabhupada:** Proxy, yes.

**Satsvarupa:** Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...

**Prabhupada:** He’s guru. He’s guru. “

In this case, the conversation would make no sense. How can the proxy be the guru? One may say; of course, that the proxy and the person who gives the initiation are not the same, but Satsvarupa Maharaja is referring to them as the same person. The RtVik-vadis would have to say, then, that Srila Prabhupada either is not answering the question or does not understand it.

TFO thus suggests a contradiction, the proxy would be the guru, but tries to save itself by giving Srila Prabhupada a habit he did not have: The paper says that when Srila Prabhupada uses the word “he” he is talking about himself (and that to think otherwise is “clearly absurd”).





# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

TFO says:

*“When discussing philosophical or managerial issues surrounding his position as acarya, Srila Prabhupada would invariably refer to himself in the third person.”*

The RtVik-vadis are saying here that when Srila Prabhupada would speak of himself, he would not say “I,” as other people do, but would say “he,” and that this was his invariable way of speaking. In other words, they say that when Srila Prabhupada would want to say I am your guru, “he would invariably say, “He is your guru, “ and leave the bewildered disciple to guess what he meant.

But Srila Prabhupada spoke in such a way rarely if at all. When he spoke about the spiritual master in general, he would use the third person, and when he spoke about himself, he would use the first person, the same as everyone else. One has only to look through Srila Prabhupada’s letters and conversations on the Folio for proof. Thus the, RtVik-vadis say that Srila Prabhupada spoke clearly and directly about important issues (we all agree), but go on to say that when Srila Prabhupada says “he” he means “I.”

But their argument is too easy. They take any word they want, give it any meaning they want, and make Srila Prabhupada appear to say anything they want. So “he” means “I.” Why not “black” means “white”? How about, “When Srila Prabhupada says ‘Krsna,’ he means ‘Darwin’ “? Who can say where it would end?

In fact, Srila Prabhupada uses the word “I” to refer to himself in this very conversation, so according to the ,RtVik-vadis’ theory, Srila Prabhupada would sometimes - say “I” and some-times “he” when speaking of himself, even

at the same time. If the RtVik-vadis think Srila Prabhupada’s use of language is so imprecise and confusing, how can they attach so much importance to one single word in the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter?

To further test the, RtVik-vadis’ premise, let us take this segment of the conversation and substitute “I” for “he,” as well as “proxy” for “acarya”:

**“Tamala Krsna:** Is that called proxy-atcarya?

**“Prabhupada:** Proxy, yes.

**“Satsvarupa:** Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...

**“Prabhupada:** I’m guru. I’m guru.”

It would seem, then, that Srila Prabhupada is not answering the question at all. He would simply be declaring himself guru and giving no information about “that person who gives the initiation.” The RtVik-vadis may argue that the “person who gives the initiation” is really Srila Prabhupada, but then Srila Prabhupada would simply be saying that he is the guru of the people he initiates, something Satsvarupa Maharaja already knows.

When Satsvarupa Maharaja says “that person who gives the initiation,” he is speaking not about Srila Prabhupada but about the person who will perform the ceremony or take charge of the new disciple after Srila Prabhupada’s departure. That is the whole point of the conversation. Are we to think that Srila Prabhupada does not understand what anyone is talking about here?

Srila Prabhupada did not call the GBCs to his side just to tell them that he is the guru of the people he initiates. He called them in to answer their questions about what to do after his departure. The, RtVik-vadis version that Srila Prabhupada says “he” when he means “I” turns the conversation into nonsense. This point will become more obvious later on. On the other hand, Srila Prabhupada’s words “He’s guru”-literally say that his disciples will be gurus after his departure.

**The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation continues:**

**Satsvarupa:** But he does it on your behalf.

**Prabhupada:** Yes. That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become guru, so on my behalf, on my order... Amara ajnuya guru hana. Be actually guru, but by my order.

**Analysis:** Satsvarupa Maharaja says “on your behalf,” again suggesting the possibility of proxy initiation and the willingness of the GBCs to accept whatever Srila Prabhupada would say. Satsvarupa Maharaja is certainly not prompting Srila Prabhupada or trying to trick Srila Prabhupada into giving



# 100 deviations

one answer or another. But Srila Prabhupada answers here that “on my behalf” does not mean acting as a post samadhi proxy but means becoming an actual guru. And in the garden conversation of July 7<sup>th</sup> 1977, Srila Prabhupada says that proxy initiation is a formality to be observed during his presence:

***Tamala Krsna:*** *So if someone gives initiation, like Harikesa Maharaja, he should send the person's name to us here and I'll enter it in the book. Okay. Is there someone else in India that you want to do this?*

***Prabhupada:*** *India, I am here.*”

The statement “India, I am here” shows that Srila Prabhupada is talking about a system for use during his physical presence. One may argue that there is no order for the disciples to stop the proxy initiation and become initiating gurus after Srila Prabhupada's departure, but that order had already been given on May 28. In other words, in the May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation Srila Prabhupada orders his disciples to take up the work of initiating guru, and in the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter, based on the July 7<sup>th</sup> garden conversation, Srila Prabhupada describes proxy initiation as a system to be followed during his physical presence. When Srila Prabhupada says “on my behalf, on my order...,” the RtVik-vadis say that he is speaking of an order to come in the future, that if this statement itself were the order, then Srila Prabhupada would have said something like, “Now I am giving the order.”

Why?

“Be guru, but by my order” is in the present tense, with no indication of future. The “but” does not indicate future, since “but” can be used in any tense: “I am a guru, but only by the order of Srila Prabhupada,” or “I became a guru, but only by the order of Srila Prabhupada.” It is unreasonable to impose an idea of future tense on a statement that is in the present. When Lord Caitanya said, “On My order, become a spiritual master,” He did not have to repeat Himself and say, “Now I am giving the order.” The words “on My order” themselves point to the order.

Here, Srila Prabhupada says “on my order” as a clarification of “on my behalf:” “So on my behalf, on my order... Amara ajnaya guru hana. Be actually guru, but by my order.”

One becomes a spiritual master on behalf of his own spiritual master, on the order of his spiritual master, carrying on the disciplic succession. Srila Prabhupada is telling his disciples to become spiritual masters, but as his servant, in the same way that Srila Prabhupada himself became a spiritual master on behalf of His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura.

Srila Prabhupada says, “In my presence one should not become guru.” Some may argue that because Srila Prabhupada is present in his books, the order is that no one may initiate for ten thousand years. But Satsvarupa Maharaja's opening question says “initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us.” Satsvarupa Maharaja is clearly talking about Srila Prabhupada's physical presence. If Srila Prabhupada's answer “in my presence” is about the presence of his books, Srila Prabhupada is either ignoring the question or playing a trick on the GBC, two unlikely possibilities.

***The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation continues:***

***Satsvarupa:*** *So they may also be considered your disciples.*

***Prabhupada:*** *Yes, they are disciples. Why consider? Who?*

**Analysis:** Satsvarupa Maharaja again suggests the possibility of proxy initiation. Srila Prabhupada could say yes, but he does not. On the contrary, Srila Prabhupada suggests that the question does not make sense. Therefore, Tamala Krsna Maharaja will ask for clarification.

***The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation continues:***

***Tamala Krsna:*** *No, he's asking that these RtVik-acaryas, they're officiating, giving diksa. Their... The people who they give diksa to, whose disciple are they?*

***Prabhupada:*** *They're his disciple.*

***Tamale Krsna:*** *They're his disciple.*



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

**Prabhupada:** *Who is initiating. He is granddisciple.*

**Analysis:** Again, Srila Prabhupada does not take the word “RtVik” to mean “proxy.” In fact, the word “RtVik” seems to have no bearing on the conversation at all. Srila Prabhupada says that those who are initiated by the RtVik-acaryas become the granddisciples of Srila Prabhupada. They become the disciples of the RtVik-acaryas. The passage is clear, logical, easy to understand, and in line with our teachings. And Srila Prabhupada says that the new initiate is the disciple of the ,RtVik.

Again, let us substitute “proxy” for “RtVik “:

**“Tamala Krsna:** No, he’s asking that these proxy-acaryas, they’re officiating, giving diksa. Their... The people who they give diksa to, whose disciple are they?

**“Prabhupada:** They’re his disciple.

**“Tamala Krsna:** They’re his disciple.

**“Prabhupada:** Who is initiating. He is granddisciple.”

Again, the passage would contradict itself. If the new initiate is the disciple of the proxy, then the proxy is not a proxy. And again, the RtVik-vadis try to resolve their contradiction by put ring a twist on the passage. They read the passage differently, maybe because of a lack of clarity in the recording. They read it as:

**“Prabhupada:** Who is initiating. His granddisciple.” (“He is granddisciple” becomes “His granddisciple.”)

TFO says:

*“In his question Tamala Krsna is asking about rtwik-acaryas, not diksa gurus. Therefore we know, even before Prabhupada answers, that any disciples referred to can only belong to the initiator, Srila Prabhupada. As we have shown, this is the very definition of RtVik, he acts on someone else’s behalf.”*

The above paragraph has two faults. First, it assumes that Srila Prabhupada is the initiator without Srila Prabhupada’s having said so. Nowhere in this conversation does Srila Prabhupada say that he will continue to be the initiator after his departure. Second, their “very definition of “RtVik” is wrong again. “RtVik” means “priest,” and a priest is not obliged to act on someone else’s behalf. The yajna brahmanas of Vrndavana were RtViks and were acting on their own behalf. One may argue that their yajna was not an initiation, but still they were acting on their own behalf, as opposed to the Controversy Paper’s “very definition of RtVik. “

TFO continues:

*“Line 1920. Tamala Krsna repeats the answer, and Srila Prabhupada continues: ‘who is initiating. His grand disciple.’ We have chosen the transcript version ‘His grand disciple’ over the version ‘he is grand disciple’ since it most closely resembles the tape, and seems to flow best with what is being said.”*

But Srila Prabhupada may have said “He’s grand disciple,” in which case, “His grand disciple” would not resemble the tape more closely. TFO continues:

*“We have established that in speaking in the third person Srila Prabhupada must be speaking of himself.”*

They have established no such thing. They have proposed it, but the Folio proves the contrary. Again, Srila Prabhupada would speak of himself in the first person, like everyone else.

TFO continues:

*“To help us understand more clearly what Srila Prabhupada is saying, let us replace third person with first person statements, shown in brackets, for lines 17-20.”*

Two faults here: First, it is only an assumption, that Srila.Prabhupada is speaking about himself in the third person. Second; by inserting words in brackets one could make Srila Prabhupada appear to speak any words one might want, even mayavada philosophy. TFO continues:

**“Tamala Krsna:** ... Whose disciples are they?

**“Srila Prabhupada:** They are (my) disciples.



# 100 Deviations

**“Tamala Krsna:** They are (your) disciples.

**“Srila Prabhupada:** (I am) initiating. (My) grand disciple.”

Why not “[ He is ] initiating. [ My ] grand disciple.” Who can say which brackets are better?

Because the RtVik-vadis read “he is” as “his,” they insist that “initiating” and “grand disciple” must both be preceded by pronouns in the same person (“I am initiating my granddisciple” or “He is initiating his grand disciple”). Thus they assume that the new initiate is the granddisciple of the initiator and since the new initiate cannot be the granddisciple of the RtVik, he must be the granddisciple of Srila Prabhupada, and therefore Srila Prabhupada is the initiator.

But their logic goes in circles because they assume beforehand that their parenthetical insertions are correct: The insertions are correct because this is what Srila Prabhupada must have meant, and Srila Prabhupada must have meant this because of the inserted words. Here is the “classic circular argument” the RtVik-vadis mention in one of their papers: it is their own argument.

The RtVik-vadis would have Srila Prabhupada say, “I am initiating my granddisciple.” Thus they admit that even according to their own view the new initiate is a granddisciple of Srila Prabhupada as opposed to the direct disciples initiated during Srila Prabhupada’s physical presence. There would still be a one-generation difference between those initiated during Srila Prabhupada’s physical presence and those initiated later. But how can some be direct disciples and others be grand-disciples if the initiator is the same and pre-samadhi or post-samadhi makes no difference?

And why the obscure language? If Srila Prabhupada were speaking about himself as the initiator, why would he say “who” instead of “I”? “Who” (meaning “he who”) refers to a general principle, not a particular person. Again, Srila Prabhupada’s habit was to say “I” when speaking of himself. Why a sudden departure from his usual way of speaking and from clear language? The reading “He is granddisciple” requires no interpretation or stretching of the imagination. It is straightforward and logical, in line with Srila Prabhupada’s usual way of speaking. But whatever the reading, whatever the insertion, the fact remains that the new disciple is the granddisciple of Srila Prabhupada and cannot be the Godbrother or Godsister of the pre-samadhi disciples. No amount of word-twisting can change it:

**“Prabhupada:** They’re his disciple.

**“Tamala Krsna:** They’re his disciple.

**“Prabhupada:** Who is initiating. He is granddisciple.”

*The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation continues:*

**Satsvarupa:** Yes.

**Tamala Krsna:** That’s clear.

**Analysis:** This passage does not give any information.

*The May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation continues:*

**Satsvarupa:** Then we have a question cancer...

**Prabhupada:** When I order, “You become guru, “ he becomes regular guru. That’s all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. That’s it.

**Analysis:** Satwarupa Maharaja is ready to move on to another question, but Srila Prabhupada continues the discussion. Although the RtVik-vadis say that Srila Prabhupada should have stopped speaking at the beginning of the discussion, Srila Prabhupada himself wants to continue.

Then Srila Prabhupada says:

“When I order, ‘You become guru,’ he becomes regular guru.”

Taken out of context, the sentence could seemingly point to a future order, but in the context of the conversation it could only be a restatement of the order given above by Srila Prabhupada. Otherwise, why would Srila Prabhupada say “That’s all”?



## 100 गुरु वैचित्र्य

The comment “That’s all” implies that the instruction is complete, that there is no more to add. Srila Prabhupada is summing it up, not reversing it. One may say that the word “when” indicates a future order, but “when” does not necessarily indicate future any more than “but.” (“When I see a sunrise, I think of Krsna.”)

Then Srila Prabhupada says, “He becomes disciple of my disciple. That’s it,” another simple restatement of what has already been said. This final statement is clear and needs no elaboration: “disciple of my disciple.”

Again, let us test the RtVik-vadis’ theory by substituting “I” for “he”:

“Prabhupada: When I order, ‘You become guru,’ I become regular guru. That’s all.”

Thus, the, RtVik-vadis’ theory about “he” and “I” would ultimately reduce the conversation to nonsense.

In short, Srila Prabhupada has stated the principles of post samadhi initiations, and he will confirm his order by naming some people to begin the process. This conversation is Srila Prabhupada’s last official response to the question, How will initiations go on after your departure? Srila Prabhupada answers with terms such as regular guru, disciple of my disciple, and grand disciple.

There is nothing in this conversation to indicate that people initiated after the departure of Srila Prabhupada would be the disciples of anyone other than the person who gives the initiation, call him RtVik or not. The new initiates will be the grand disciples of Srila Prabhupada. Thus we find in this discussion an affirmation of Srila Prabhupada’s teachings of the previous twelve years, in harmony with the Vedic tradition.

*[ End of analysis of the conversation ]*

After discussing the fifth and last question, “a question about the BBT”, Srila Prabhupada spontaneously goes back to the subject of initiations.

**Prabhupada:** And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, amara ajnaya guru hana. One can understand the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he can become guru. Or one who understands his guru’s order, the same parampara, he can become guru. And therefore I shall select some of you.

As explained above, Srila Prabhupada made the selection on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1977.

In the May 28 conversation Srila Prabhupada definitively confirmed how initiations should go on after his departure. That conversation was recorded on tape and the conclusions were written down in the GBC minutes book, which was signed by everyone present, immediately after the conversation took place.

The RtViks can’t erase Srila Prabhupada’s words on that tape, “regular guru”; “disciple of my disciple”; “grand disciple” and so their only argument is to destroy the credibility of the tape. One ,RtVik-vadi argument concerning the May 28 tapes is that the tapes aren’t acceptable evidence because of the result of a forensic investigation commissioned by the GBC, but the analysis simply reveals that on the tape there are pauses and stops. This practice of pausing or stopping the cassette recorder was very common. Hart-sauri Prabhu writes:

*“I personally recorded Srila Prabhupada almost every day for about 10 months. I was the first one to use a cassette recorder rather than the old reel-to-reel. My habit, which was emulated by my successor recordist, Tamala Krsna Goswami, was to use a tape until it was full. Consequently, multiple short conversations may be found on many of the tapes, replete with the necessary stops and starts. Not only that, if there was an extended break in a conversation we had the habit of pausing or stopping the tape recorder and then starting up again when the conversation restarted. Thus it is not surprising that the tape Perle examined has many stops and starts. There are heaps of tapes just like it in the Archives.”*

The other point the lab made, the most significant point in relation to the discussion which the ,RtViks never point out because it doesn’t fit into their theory was that there is no evidence of tampering in the section of the tape in which Srila Prabhupada answers the questions from the GBCs.





## 100 Deviations of RtVikism

In the May 28 Srila Prabhupada clearly confirmed that he wanted a regular guru system to continue after his disappearance. Therefore, the RtVik-vadis attempt at discrediting the tape, resorting to saying that the tape is not acceptable because the devotee doing the recording recorded more than one conversation on the same tape! But the forensic laboratory states clearly that the section containing this entire conversation is unbroken and shows no sign of adulteration.

Mr. Norman I. Perle (American Board of Recorded Evidence Nationally Certified Expert), is the forensic expert who examined the tape. He confirmed that the section in question is 'virgin' and unadulterated. Mr. Perle certified that the full 18+ minutes conversation has no signs of editing, erasures, starts and stops. Perle found no sign of signs "suggestive of falsification" on the entire length of the section of recording of the May 28 conversation, Mrgendra Dasa (who arranged the forensic analysis on behalf of the GBC) wrote: "When I asked him to confirm on the phone whether I was correct that there was no start or stop during the disputed portion of the tape, Mr. Perle did confirm that..." therefore the recording of the conversation we are dealing with was admitted to be OK.

For full details on the forensic analysis one can consult the paper "The Minutes of the Timeless Order" by Hari-sauri Prabhu.

But there is more than the tape to confirm that it actually took place: the GBC recorded in its Minutes book before the conversation took place that it was delegating some of its members to ask certain questions about initiations, the GBC body and membership etc. It also records that the meeting place, and what the answers were to their questions as given by Srila Prabhupada. Hari-sauri Prabhu wrote to a Godbrother influenced by RtVik-vada:

"I wonder why you find the GBC Minutes unacceptable? (At least I presume you do since you don't refer to them at all.) When they were written down, very shortly after the meeting with Srila Prabhupada, and witnessed not by one or two but many, do you seriously think that there was a conspiracy afoot?

Try to put yourself in Vrndavana on May 29 1977 before anyone had even heard of ReVik-acarya. The concept didn't exist. Nobody knew what Prabhupada's response was going to be to the questions, nor having gotten it, did anyone have any notion of what would happen after, i.e. nobody could anticipate at that time that it would even be questioned since the assumption was that all ISKCON members were only interested in fulfilling Srila Prabhupada's desire.

It was an honest, sincere meeting with only one intent to understand Srila Prabhupada's desire for initiations after his departure. His statements were recorded electronically and in writing. I don't know why this is not acceptable to you."

Finally, there is the testimony of the GBCs themselves. H.H. Jayapataka Swami writes:

"I was personally in Vrndavana for that GBC meeting during May, 1977 and although I wasn't in the room as one of the 5 GBC delegates when the questions were asked and Srila Prabhupada answered them. I did hear the report from the delegates in the subsequent debriefing and reporting that happened to the whole GBC body after the darsana. There was only one understanding of what Srila Prabhupada wanted. That was put down in short and clear words in the GBC emergency minute book. All of the GBC's present signed the minute book accepting Srila Prabhupada's instructions.

Later in those days all discussions with GBC's who were present in the room with Srila Prabhupada corroborated the same conclusions. In those days we didn't have the habit of replaying Srila Prabhupada's tapes and analyzing his statements since they were fresh and everyone understood the same conclusion there was no purpose in doing so. To say that Srila Prabhupada didn't say those things and that His Divine Grace didn't give instructions and create some kind of confusion over the validity of those instructions is really a smoke screen and diversionary tactic. All disciples should understand that Srila Prabhupada did give instructions at that time and did want us to follow those instructions. He doesn't have to give an instruction more than once for it to be valid. Apart from that Srila Prabhupada's whole life only talks about parampara. He never talked about the system of RtVik initiations as a means to propagate Krsna consciousness after the spiritual master ends his visible pastimes in this world.



Srila Prabhupada said to me and many sannyasis that every sannyasi has a right to accept disciples.

That it was the etiquette not to accept disciples in the (physical) presence of the diksa-guru. Therefore, we shouldn't accept disciples as long as Srila Prabhupada was present physically before us. Srila Prabhupada always instructed that he wanted his disciples to initiate disciples and continue the disciplic succession. His instructions on May 28<sup>th</sup> simply corroborated what Srila Prabhupada had been instructing his whole life."

In summary: Srila Prabhupada consistently said over the entire period of his ISKCON preaching that he wanted his disciples to continue the parampara by becoming regular gurus, giving initiations and accepting disciples. Srila Prabhupada reconfirmed these instructions on 28 May, 1977, when specifically asked by the GBC at a time when his departure seemed imminent. It is beyond contention that the May 28 conversation took place and that in it Srila Prabhupada gave a final confirmation that his disciples would become regular gurus.

This is verifiable and verified by three different sources:

1. The tape recording of the conversation, which contrary to the RtVik-vadis claims of inadmissibility, is an unbroken recorded sequence which shows no sign of having been tampered with.
2. The written record of the GBC Minutes book, which states their intent to ask certain questions before the meeting with Prabhupada took place, and the results of that meeting which were recorded in writing afterwards.
3. The testimony of the GBC members themselves.

Through word jugglery, some RtVik-vadis try to squeeze imaginary meanings out of the conversation, in open disregard of the rules of linguistics. The following is from "The Minutes of the Timeless Order" by Hari-sauri Prabhu:

Let's hear from a couple of devotees who happen to be English language experts just whose understanding of that conversation they think we should listen to:

**Sriman Bharatasrestha Dasa**, (William G. Wall, Professor of Vaisnava Literature and Theology; BA (summa cum laude), MA, Ph.D in English) responded to a question I put to him thus:

**Hari-sauri Dasa:** In trying to understand whether Prabhupada'said, 'His grand-disciple' or 'He's grand-disciple' is it gramatically correct for the reader to refer first to the antecedent to decide? Surely in a two word sentence 'He's (His) grand-disciple' wouldn't you first look at the rest of the sentence to figure out the first word, a pronoun, rather than look back at the antecedent?"

Bharatasrestha Dasa: I would have to say that, while in formal writing a pronoun must refer to the nearest preceding noun, in speech there are few, if any, rules. We are dealing with complex grammars operating in the 'understood' mode. Noam Chomsky built a career on that. A 2 year old's one syllable sentence is grammatically complete according to the Theory of Innate Grammar, and it is also true according to parents, who do, in fact, understand the child's utterance despite the fact that grammatically necessary ingredients have been omitted, just as those present in the room understood Srila Prabhupada to mean that after Srila Prabhupada's passing new devotees would be disciples of Srila Prabhupada's disciples. See JL Austin, Searle, Strawson, Gricce and Speech Act Theory.

I'm sure you can find other cases where Srila Prabhupada used clipped speech, denying a pronoun its formal antecedent. If Srila Prabhupada had been writing for publication, it would be a different matter. The authority in this case, according to Speech Act Theory, would be Tamala Krsna Goswami [to whom Prabhupada was speaking]. Srila Prabhupada meant what those in the room say he meant. Period. This is, by the way, Philosophy, not Grammar."

The point about speech being taken in the "understood" mode is important. All of us have experience of gaining an understanding of what another person is saying to us without necessarily being any real observance of grammatical rule in the exchange. Indeed, sometimes a meaning is conveyed without words at all! A conversational exchange is not just words. The intonation of the voice, the expression of the face, movement of the eyes and eyebrows, the use of the hands and other bodily parts-



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

body language if you will are all important in conveying a message, and in understanding what has been conveyed.

In the exchange between Srila Prabhupada and the GBC all of this was at play and is reflected in the conversation:

**Prabhupada:** They're his disciple.

**Tamala Krsna:** They're his disciple.

**Prabhupada:** Who is initiating. He's (He is) grand-disciple.

**Satsvarupa:** Yes.

**Tamala Krsna:** That's clear.

**Satsvarupa:** Then we have a question cancer...

**Prabhupada:** When I order, 'You become guru,' he becomes regular guru. That's all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. That's it.

**Satsvarupa:** Next we have a question about the BBT.

"When Srila Prabhupada clarified the exchange by saying "Who is initiating. He's grand-disciple," the GBC men present (not just Tamala Krsna Goswami and Satsvarupa Maharaja) all understood the same thing that "Who is initiating" referred Srila Prabhupada's disciple, the person whom he would "recommend" to perform diksa; and "He's (He is) grand-disciple" referred to the relationship between Srila Prabhupada and the new initiate. Thus they confirmed their understanding by saying "Yes" and "That's clear."

They were ready to move on, but Srila Prabhupada wanted to reiterate the point just to ensure it was well understood. Again he restated the same thing, in slightly different terms. About his disciples he says "When I order 'You become guru' he becomes regular guru. That's all." And about the new initiate's relationship with himself he says "He becomes disciple of my disciple." Satisfied that they have understood him clearly, he concludes this question and answer topic with "That's it." They all then move on to another topic, concerning the BBT.

For a second expert opinion I consulted with Sriman Babhru Dasa, who is a thirty-year disciple of Srila Prabhupada and has many years of experience teaching English at University level:

"As I look at Krishnakant's so-called analysis of this excerpt from the May 28<sup>th</sup> Conversation, I'm struck by how far he has to stretch to make his point. I don't think it's necessarily fruitful to perform the kind of analysis he tries to apply here. His assertion that 'in this case the pronoun cannot be he' seems overstated. In his paragraph 6, he also states unequivocally that 'a speaker cannot just introduce a pronoun that has no antecedent.' In fact, in conversation speakers do all sorts of things contrary to formal grammatical rules. This may be particularly so if English is not the speaker's first language. We heard Srila Prabhupada do this all the time on walks, in his room, and even in formal lectures in the temple. Examples are legion. I'm just amazed that devotees who had so much association with Srila Prabhupada would buy such an argument.

There are many possible ways to read those two sentences. Either could be a fragment ('Who is initiating,' if not a question, is a fragment; 'His grand-disciple' would be a fragment.), but the meaning must come from the entire conversation, not from some imputed grammatical conventions imposed on a somewhat casual conversation (casual in the sense that he was at ease with his disciples, not that the subject was insignificant). I have some sympathy with many of the proponents' practical and spiritual concerns regarding ISKCON's policies on gurus. However, as an English teacher, an editor, and a disciple of almost 30 years' standing, I find Krishnakant's whole exercise here somewhat foolish.

I think the simplest, most straightforward reading of this is that the two utterances on that line may well be discrete thoughts. They are probably related, but not in the most direct of ways. We often heard in Srila Prabhupada's conversation that he would tease out an idea with fragments (we all do it). I think that may be what he's doing here. The entire exchange is not a paragon of clarity, with pro-



# 100 गलत वैचारिक तथ्यांक

nouns switching from singular to plural and back. The communication is not the clearest. Therefore, I think that Krishnakant presumes too in making a big case about inconsistency in number. This passage is rife with such inconsistency. I just don't think he can adequately support his argument with this.

I think for anyone to interpret these things in the way Krishnakant pretends to, they would need more intimate knowledge of Srila Prabhupada's casual speech and/or some background in linguistics. I presume to make the readings here with some reservations. However, I have been listening to Srila Prabhupada daily for almost 29 years, and I have some academic training in linguistics (at least 4 courses, including psycholinguistics and socio-linguistics)."

## 4. Misrepresentation of the Letter of July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977

### 42. Misrepresenting as relevant a letter which is irrelevant to the issue of initiations after Srila Prabhupada's departure

#### 43. All bluff, no stuff

#### 44. Misrepresenting the letter as a "final order" (the word order' is not even mentioned)

#### 45. Disregarding the fact that the letter was not worded by Srila Prabhupada but by his secretary

#### 46. Disregarding the dictionary meaning of the word "henceforward"

#### 47. Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's usage of the word "henceforward"

#### 48. Disregarding the logical consequences of taking the word "henceforward" in the sense of "forever"

#### 49. Imagining that Srila Prabhupada would revolutionize all he ever said about disciplic succession by the single adverb "henceforward" in a letter written by his secretary

#### 50. Disregarding that the Temple Presidents to whom the letter is addressed wanted to know how their bhaktas and bhaktins could get initiation, not how initiations would continue after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance

#### 51. Disregarding the connection to the May 28 May conversation

#### 52. Disregarding the connection to the July 7 conversation

#### 53. Disregarding that Srila Prabhupada indicated that he himself could continue to handle initiation requests from India

#### 54. Disregarding the sentence "The name of a newly initiated disciple should be sent by the representative who has accepted him or her to Srila Prabhupada"

#### 55. Disregarding the direct explanation of the author of the letter Misrepresenting the lack of temporary references as meaning that the letter was forever

The July 9 letter is completely irrelevant to the discussion of how initiations should be conducted after Srila Prabhupada physical disappearance because the subject of Srila Prabhupada's disappearance is not mentioned at all. Here is the famous "July 9<sup>th</sup> letter", written by Tamala Krsna Maharaja:



# 100 गलत वैचारिकताएँ

## July 9<sup>th</sup> , 1977 To All G.B.C., and Temple Presidents

Dear Maharajas and Prabhus, Please accept my humble obeisances at your feet. Recently when all of the GBC members were with His Divine Grace in Vrndavana, Srila Prabhupada indicated that soon He would appoint some of His senior disciples to act as “RtVik” - representative of the acarya, for the purpose of performing initiations, both first initiation and second initiation. His Divine Grace has so far given a list of eleven disciples who will act in that capacity:

His Holiness Kirtanananda Swami  
His Holiness Jayapataka Swami  
His Holiness Hridayananda Gosvami  
His Holiness Hamsaduta Swami  
His Holiness Harikesa Swami  
His Grace Jayatirtha dasa Adhikari

His Holiness Satsvarupa dasa Gosvami  
His Holiness Tamala Krsna Gosvami  
His Holiness Bhavananda Gosvami  
His Holiness Ramesvara Swami  
His Grace Bhagavan dasa Adhikari

In the past Temple Presidents have written to Srila Prabhupada recommending a particular devotee's initiation. Now that Srila Prabhupada has named these representatives, Temple Presidents may henceforward send recommendation for first and second initiation to whichever of these eleven representatives are nearest their temple. After considering the recommendation, these representatives may accept the devotee as an initiated disciple of Srila Prabhupada by giving a spiritual name, or in the case of second initiation, by chanting on the Gayatri thread, just as Srila Prabhupada has done. The newly initiated devotees are disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the above eleven senior devotees acting as His representative. After the Temple President receives a letter from these representatives giving the spiritual name or the thread, he can perform the fire yajna in the temple as was being done before. The name of a newly initiated disciple should be sent by the representative who has accepted him or her to Srila Prabhupada, to be included in His Divine Grace's "Initiated Disciples" book.

Hoping this finds you all well.

Your servant,

Tamala Krsna Gosvami Secretary to Srila Prabhupada

Approved: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

### From “Prabhupada's Order”:

The subject of this letter is used in TFO as the irrefutable 'final order', which attempts to prove the case of the RtVik philosophy. The letter was a response to a conversation of July 7<sup>th</sup> , where Tamala Krsna Maharaja brings to Srila Prabhupada's attention the dilemma of what to do about all the devotees who wanted to take initiation but had been told to wait due to Prabhupada's sickness. Although this conversation is a follow-on from the one of May 28<sup>th</sup> in the fact that Prabhupada actually names those devotees who would act as 'officiating acaryas', the reason behind the conversation is significantly different. The May 28 conversation deals specifically with the question of what would happen after Srila Prabhupada's departure, and he answers unequivocally that his disciples would accept disciples of their own. In contrast, this conversation, from the very beginning, deals with the question of what to do about the backlog of new initiation candidates:

**Tamala Krsna:** Srila Prabhupada? We're receiving a number of letters now, and these are people who want to get initiated. So up until now, since your becoming ill, we asked them to wait.

**Prabhupada:** The local, mean [men?], senior sannyasis can do that.

**Tamale Krsna:** That's what we were doing... I mean, formerly we were... The local GBC, sannyasis, were chanting on their beads, and they were writing to Your Divine Grace, and you were giving a spiritual name. So should that process be resumed, or should we...? I mean one thing is that it's said that the spiritual master takes on the... You know, he takes on the... tie has to cleanse the disciple by... So we don't want that you should have to... Your health is not so good, so that should not be...





# 100 Deviations

That's why we've been asking everybody to wait. I just want to know if we should continue to wait some more time.

**Prabhupada:** No, the senior sannyasis...

**Tamala Krsna:** So they should continue to...

**Prabhupada:** You can give me a list of sannyasis. I will mark who will...

**Tamala Krsna:** Okay.

**Prabhupada:** You can do. Kirtanananda can do. And our Satsvarupa can do. So these three, you can give, begin.

**Tamala Krsna:** So supposing someone is in America, should they simply write directly to Kirtanananda or Satsvarupa?

**Prabhupada:** Nearby. Jayatirtha can give.

**Tamala Krsna:** Jayatirtha.

**Prabhupada:** Bhavanan..., er, Bhagavan. And he can do also. Harikesa. "

**Tamala Krsna:** Harikesa Maharaja.

**Prabhupada:** And... Five, six men, you divide who is nearest.

**Tamala Krsna:** Who is nearest. So persons wouldn't have to write to Your Divine Grace. They could write directly to that person?

**Prabhupada:** Hm.

**Tamala Krsna:** Actually they are initiating the person on Your Divine Grace's behalf. Those persons who are initiated are still your...

**Prabhupada:** Second initiation we shall think over, second initiation.

**Tamala Krsna:** This is for first initiation, okay. And for second initiation, for the time being they should...

**Prabhupada:** No, they have to wait. Second initiation, that should be given...

**Tamala Krsna:** Should... Some devotees are writing you now for second initiation, and I'm writing them to wait a while because you're not well. So can I continue to tell them that?

**Prabhupada:** They can do second initiation.

**Tamala Krsna:** By writing you.

**Prabhupada:** No. These men.

**Tamala Krsna:** These men, they can also do second initiation. So there's no need for devotees to write to you for first and second initiation. They can write to the man nearest them. But all these persons are still your disciples. Anybody who gives initiation is doing so on your behalf.

**Prabhupada:** Yes.

**Tamala Krsna:** You know that book I'm maintaining of all of your disciples' names? Should I continue that?

**Prabhupada:** Hm.

**Tamala Krsna:** So if someone gives initiation, like Harikesa Maharaja, he should send the person's name to us here and I'll enter it in the book. Okay. Is there someone else in India that you want to do this?

**Prabhupada:** India, I am here. We shall see. In India, Jayapataka.

**Tamala Krsna:** Jayapataka Maharaja.

**Prabhupada:** You are also in India.

**Tamala Krsna:** Yes.

**Prabhupada:** You can note down these names.

**Tamala Krsna:** Yes, I have them.

**Prabhupada:** Who are they?

**Tamala Krsna:** Kirtanananda Maharaja, Satsvarupa Maharaja, Jayatirtha Prabhu, Bhagavan Prabhu, Harikesa Maharaja, Jayapataka Maharaja and Tamala Krsna Maharaja.

**Prabhupada:** That's nice. Now you distribute.

**Tamala Krsna:** Seven. There's seven names.



# 100 Deviations

**Prabhupada:** For the time being, seven names, sufficient. You can make Ramesvara.

**Tamala Krsna:** Ramesvara Maharaja.

**Prabhupada:** And Hrdayananda.

**Tamala Krsna:** Oh, yeah. South America.

**Prabhupada:** So without waiting for me, wherever you consider it is right... That will depend on discretion.

**Tamala Krsna:** On discretion.

**Prabhupada:** Yes.

**Tamala Krsna:** That's for first and second initiations.

**Prabhupada:** Hm.

**Tamala Krsna:** Okay. Shall I send a kirtana party, Srila Prabhupada? (break)

The reason for this conversation, as stated above, is that there was a backlog of hundreds of devotees who wanted to take initiation from Srila Prabhupada. However, the initiations had been stopped, as Tamala Krsna Maharaja explains, because the devotees close to Prabhupada were concerned about Prabhupada having to accept the karma of his disciples in his weakened condition.

The practice of having his disciples perform initiations on his behalf had been instituted by Prabhupada since the early days of the movement. He accepted this as a necessary step to spread Krsna Consciousness worldwide. The only difference now was that devotees could write directly to any of the senior disciples named by Srila Prabhupada, and he would initiate them, give them a spiritual name and send the record of initiation to Prabhupada in Vrndavana.

There are also two very clear evidences in the conversation that Srila Prabhupada and Tamala Krsna Maharaja were talking specifically about that time, i.e. when Prabhupada was present there in Vrndavana, and not for ever after. The first is where Tamala Krsna Maharaja states, "So if someone gives initiation, like Harikesa Maharaja, he should send the person's name to us here and I'll enter it in the book." This quite clearly confirms the context of the conversation, which had been set at the beginning; it was regarding the question of initiations while Srila Prabhupada was sick in Vrndavana.

Another confirmation of this comes when Tamala Krsna Maharaja asks Srila Prabhupada, "Is there someone else in India that you want to do this?" and Prabhupada answers "India, I am here. We shall see. In India, Jayapataka..." this clearly reveals Srila Prabhupada as accepting the context of the matters being discussed related to what should happen at that time, when he was present but not physically fit to perform initiations. Therefore to claim that this conversation and the distribution of its message via the July 9<sup>th</sup> letter as a 'final order', which once and for all establishes the future of initiations for all time in ISKCON totally neglects to understand the clearly stated purpose for the conversation, and its context, from beginning right to end.

The subject of this conversation was then dictated by Tamala Krsna Maharaja as a letter to all Temple Presidents and GBC's letting them know that initiations could again be performed, and which devotees Srila Prabhupada had deputed to oversee the giving of names and chanting on beads.

The fact that this arrangement was not intended to be for all time is again confirmed in the letter resulting from the above conversation, where Tamala Krsna Maharaja says, "The name of a newly initiated disciple should be sent by the representative who has accepted him or her to Srila Prabhupada, to be included in His Divine Grace's 'Initiated Disciples' book."

Much effort has gone into trying to analyze and make judgments on what is the actual meaning of this letter. Of course, if you want to know what is actually meant by some particular statement, the very best person to ask is the person who made it. As the letter was written by Tamala Krsna Maharaja, we thought it pertinent to allow him to explain what he actually meant by the letter, and particularly the word 'henceforward' which is often highlighted to have special significance.

On July 31<sup>st</sup>, 1998, we contacted His Holiness Tamala Krsna Goswami by email, asking him to give some first hand insight about how the word 'henceforward' was used in the letter of July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1977.



# 100 deviations

As the person who wrote this letter, which was later countersigned by Srila Prabhupada, he is in the best position to know what the intended meaning was. He was asked three questions and his answers follow each question.

1) Who actually worded the letter of July 9<sup>th</sup> stating 'henceforward'? I did.

2) If you worded it, what did you mean by this word?

'Henceforward' means something like, 'in the foreseeable future,' or, 'until further notice.' My service was to encourage Srila Prabhupada to survive his illness. I made every effort, both when speaking with him, and in correspondence, to be positive about recovering from his disease and continuing to physically lead the Krishna Consciousness Movement in a healthy condition. In fact, I believed this is exactly what would happen, and not until the final days did I ever think otherwise. Therefore, the word 'henceforward,' in fact the entire letter, in no way refers to a situation after Prabhupada's departure, a situation that I was not prepared to normally think of. That situation was already addressed by Prabhupada in the May 28<sup>th</sup> conversation, which I make brief mention of at the outset of my letter.

3) Was there any accompanying explanation to this letter given by you to Srila Prabhupada, when you read it to him for his approval, which may shed more light on Srila Prabhupada's understanding of the term "henceforward" in this context?

Yes, in the sense that this letter was viewed by Srila Prabhupada as a managerial document for how new disciples could continue to be initiated during His illness, not a blueprint for how the disciplic succession would continue after His departure. Though I have no specific memory about such an accompanying explanation, there undoubtedly would have been some exchange between us along the lines of what we discussed in the garden the previous day.

Hope this makes things a little clearer.

Hare Krishna.

your servant,

Tamala Krsna Goswami

The RtVik-vadis who stick to their misinterpretation of the word "henceforward" as meaning "forever" run into an unsolved paradox, as explained by H.H. Jayadvaita Maharaja in "Where the RtVik People are Wrong" (January 1996):

Taking "henceforward" to mean literally forever, never will the RtVik gurti system come to an end. By this "hard" version of the doctrine, even should an uttama-adhikari someday appear, he will never initiate disciples of his own. At most, he will serve merely as a ,RtVik. For according to this hard version of the doctrine, Srila Prabhupada is the final member of the disciplic succession. The succession has come to an end. Srila Prabhupada is the only guru, forever after. Henceforward, all new devotees will be his disciples, through his appointed RtViks.

And since we're insisting that "henceforward" must mean literally forever, we must apply it not merely to a selected portion of what Srila Prabhupada's appointment letter says but to the letter in its entirety.

"Temple presidents may henceforward send recommendation for first and second initiation to whichever of these eleven representatives are nearest their temple. After considering the recommendation, these representatives may accept the devotee... The newly initiated devotees are disciples of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, the above eleven senior devotees acting as his representative."

If we're being literal, as the argument says we must, then let's be literal. Though the letter says that Srila Prabhupada has "so far" given a list of eleven RtViks, he never added to the list.

So this is it. The only authorized RtViks are these eleven. There is no mention that any of them may ever be removed or replaced, nor is there any mention of any successor. Nor does Srila Prabhupada provide that the list may be altered by the GBC. Henceforward, these eleven.



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

Of these, one-Jayatirtha Dasa-fell into intoxication and illicit sex and is now dead. How he will continue to serve as RtVik henceforward is unclear. But presumably he must, vided we can find out where he is so we can send him requests for initiation from the temples nearest.

And then we have Kirtanananda Swami, Bhavarianda Goswami, Ramesvara Swami, and Bhagavan dasa Adhikari, all fallen from their spiritual vows but serving eternally as RtViks nonetheless.

Or Hamsaduta Swami. His falldowns have become the stuff of literature, yet now that he has become humble, perhaps he is available to serve as a RtVik.guru from now till the end of time. For some, perhaps, once again, Hamsaduta is the only way.

If these choices somehow don't suit you, you're left with Harikesa Swami, Jayapataka Swami, Hridayananda Goswami, Tamala Krsna Goswami, or Satsvarupa dasa Goswami. The problem here, of course (aside from the possibility that you may not like them), is that all of them are sure they were supposed to serve as RtViks only until Srila Prabhupada's departure. As far as they're concerned, the post-samadhi RtVik doctrines are bunk. Now these devotees wouldn't serve as RtViks for love or money. So if you're looking for an authorized RtVik, go back to the other names on the list.

And remember, henceforward-from now till the end of time- these are the only authorized RtViks.

My apologies for the sarcasm, but a person who puts forward an argument is obliged to live with its consequences. And if the consequences are absurd, so is the argument.

More analysis of the word "henceforward".

By Drutakarma Prabhu, from "Krishnakant Desai: All Bluff, No Stuff"

But let's get back to this supposed final order by Prabhupada. Actually, if it is a final order it is a final order by Tamala Krsna Goswami, because he wrote and signed the July 9 letter. Prabhupada is referred to only indirectly, in the third person his signature is below Tamala Krsna Goswami's as an approval of Tamala Krsna Goswami's words. Furthermore, the whole process that resulted in the letter was begun not on the initiative of Srila Prabhupada but on the initiative of Tamala Krsna Goswami, who put to Srila Prabhupada a specific question, on his own accord, without any prompting from Srila Prabhupada. That question, unrelated to Prabhupada's departure, was this what to do with the backlog of initiations that had accumulated during the time when Prabhupada was not answering letters. This can be seen from the start of the July 7 conversation on this topic.

**Tamala Krsna:** Srila Prabhupada? We're receiving a number of letters now, and these are people who want to get initiated. So up until now, since your becoming ill, we asked them to wait.

**Prabhupada:** The local, mean [men?], senior sannyasis can do that.

**Tamala Krsna:** That's what we were doing... I mean, formerly we were... The local GBC, sannyasis, were chanting on their beads, and they were writing to Your Divine Grace, and you were giving a spiritual name. So should that process be resumed, or should we...? I mean one thing is that it's said that the spiritual master takes on the... You know, he takes on the... He has to cleanse the disciple by... So we don't want that you should have to... Your health is not so good, so that should not be... That's why we've been asking everybody to wait. I just want to know if we should continue to wait some more time.

**Prabhupada:** No, the senior sannyasis...

**Tamala Krsna:** So they should continue to...

**Prabhupada:** You can give me a list of sannyasis. I will mark who will...

**Tamale Krsna:** Okay.

So Srila Prabhupada was not responding to a question about how initiations would go on after his departure. He was responding to a question about what to do with a backlog of requests for initiation from devotees desiring initiation from whole concern was Srila Prabhupada's health. The devotees were thinking Srila Prabhupada was so weak that the karmic burden of accepting new disciples would not be good for him. This places the whole episode in the context of what was to be done during Srila Prabhupada's physical presence. There is no mention at all of Prabhupada's departure or how initiations were to be conducted after his departure.



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

Srila Prabhupada went on to name several other devotees. Here is another significant part of the conversation:

**Tamala Krsna:** Okay. Is there someone else in India that you want to do this?

**Prabhupada:** India, I am here. We shall see. In India, Jayapataka.

The RtVik advocates say that Srila Prabhupada was completely withdrawing from the initiation process and setting up a system that was designed to operate in an unbroken way even after his departure. But Srila Prabhupada indicated the possibility that he himself would continue to handle initiation requests from India, by saying “India, I am here.” In conclusion, on July 7 neither Srila Prabhupada nor the devotees present say anything about Prabhupada’s departure or how initiations were to go on after his departure.

In fact, Srila Prabhupada himself contemplated the possibility that he might again take a direct role in the initiation process, if he recovered his health. This is evident in the following statement made by Srila Prabhupada in Vrndavana on October 18, 1977 (conversation).

**Prabhupada:** Hare Krsna. One Bengali gentleman has come from New York?

**Tamala Krsna:** Yes. Mr. Sukamal Roy Chowdury.

**Prabhupada:** So I have deputed some of you to initiate. Hm?

**Tamala Krsna:** Yes. Actually... Yes, Srila Prabhupada.

**Prabhupada:** So I think Jayapataka can do that if he likes. I have already deputed. Tell him.

**Tamala Krsna:** Yes.

**Prabhupada:** So, deputies, Jayapataka’s name was there?

**Bhagavan:** It is already on there, Srila Prabhupada. His name was on that list.

**Prabhupada:** So I depute him to do this at Mayapura, and you may go with him. I stop for the time being. Is that all right?

**Tamala Krsna:** Stopped doing what, Srila Prabhupada?

**Prabhupada:** This initiation. I have deputed the, my disciples. Is it clear or not?

**Giriraja:** It’s clear.

**Prabhupada:** You have got the list of the names?

**Tamala Krsna:** Yes, Srila Prabhupada.

**Prabhupada:** And if by Krsna’s grace I recover from this condition, then I shall begin again, or I may not be pressed in this condition to initiate. It is not good.

Here, several months after the July 9 document, which the RtVik supporters say establishes the ,RtVik system forever, Srila Prabhupada is contemplating stopping it and taking up his initiation duties again. It seems clear that he regarded it as simply a temporary measure, related to his health, and did not see it as a system that was going to continue after his departure.

Krishnakant Desai, however, has his own opinion, and he bases it on the occurrence of the word henceforward in the July 9 letter. The first thing we have to consider is that henceforward is Tamala Krsna Goswami’s word, not Srila Prabhupada’s. Tamala Krsna Goswami is therefore the best authority for the intended meaning of the word, and he has said he did not intend that word to mean from now until eternity. So taking the letter at face value, whatever Tamala Krsna Goswami intended to say (including his intended meaning of the word henceforward) was approved by Srila Prabhupada. But even if we take it as a word approved by Prabhupada in a sense different from that intended by the author of the letter, I have carefully studied Srila Prabhupada’s use of the word “henceforward” and have found many instances in which he uses the word in a timelimited sense. Here are some examples of Srila Prabhupada’ use of the word henceforward. Many more could be cited.

1. “As I told you, that 2,500 years ago, or 5,000 years ago Vyasadeva wrote about Lord Buddha’s appearance. Still, there is appearance of Kalki from this time, henceforward, after 400,000’s of years Kalki will appear.” (Lecture on Sramad-Bhagavatam, London, August 16, 1971 )

In this case, Srila Prabhupada uses henceforward to refer to specific time in the future, a specific number of years from the present. It is not used in the sense of a ceaselessly executed action.





2. “Regarding printing 20,000 copies of Back To Godhead, I have appealed to 4 centers, namely New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and London to contribute \$750 monthly. I have got confirmation from Los Angeles, so I shall be glad to hear from New York also whether this center is going to hand over to me \$750 per month. I have no objection if this \$750 is collected in the way of advertisements from New York, but charges will be increased because we are going to print 20,000 copies henceforward.” (Letter to Rayarama, February 20, 1969).

Let us imagine that Srila Prabhupada had left the planet soon after this letter had been written. Would it have been wrong for devotees to have printed more than 20,000 copies in future? The word henceforward is obviously tied to a certain set of circumstances that could change in a very short period of time. Henceforward means, “given the current situation we shall do like this.”

In the case of the July 9 letter, the same implication is there. Given the current situation (Prabhupada still on the plane but too weak to even answer letters, devotees still requesting initiation from him) the process for initiation will go on as stated in the letter. Given that the usual system throughout history is that when a guru departs he ceases to accept disciples, Srila Prabhupada’s departure would mark a major change of circumstances requiring a change in the system outlined in the July 9 letter.

Therefore, the RtVik reading of the July 9 letter would only hold true (in unambiguous fashion) if the word henceforward had been qualified to mean that it applied even across such a major change of circumstance as Srila Prabhupada’s departure. In other words, for the RtVik case to be made unambiguously the July 9 letter should have read “henceforward, even in the event of Srila Prabhupada’s departure from this world this system will continue.” But the letter does not read that way. The word henceforward stands alone, and given that Srila Prabhupada sometimes used this word in a time limited sense, the intended meaning in the July 9 letter is unclear.

The RtVik supporters argue that it is up to their opponents to show that the word henceforward was qualified to mean the system would stop on Srila Prabhupada’s departure. Given that the normal system down through history is that a guru’s departure signals the time for him to stop accepting disciples by diksha, it is, on the contrary, up to the RtVik supporters to demonstrate that Srila Prabhupada intended the word henceforward to apply to the time after his departure.

- 3: “I have again begun speaking on the tapes and very soon you will get transcribed copies of my dictaphoning for being edited and laid out for printing, chapter-wise, the fourth canto. Let the second and third cantos be finished quickly so that the fourth canto can be started. Henceforward I shall be supplying material for all cantos and you must do the rest; editing, layout, printing, etc.”

(Letter to Candanacarya, March 3, 1971)

It is obvious here that the time period represented by the word henceforward will have an end to it, although this is not specifically stated by Srila Prabhupada. The end will come when the work on the Bhagavatam is completed. This is not stated, but it is clear from the context. Furthermore, it is obvious that the word henceforward would cease to apply if Srila Prabhupada were to leave his body. What this means is that the word henceforward does not always mean continuing into the future, forever, without end. It could mean that, but not necessarily so. In the case of the July 9 letter, the departure of Srila Prabhupada would represent a major change of circumstances. So it is not at all clear from the context that the word henceforward was taken by Srila Prabhupada to mean that the system described in that letter was to continue after their departure. The general system is that gurus do not accept disciples after their departure. So the word henceforward, meant to apply after this major change of circumstance, would have to be properly qualified to indicate this. That is not the case with the July 9 letter.

**Summary:** Henceforward is a word that means from now on but it can be qualified, either directly or indirectly. It does not mean in all cases “from now until eternity.”

In short, there is no sign at all that the July 9 letter is Prabhupada’s final order about how the disciplic succession was to continue in his absence. It was simply a temporary measure tied to his health. Srila



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

Prabhupada indicated that the system could change at any moment. Therefore it is not true that : intended the word “henceforward” to mean from now to eternity, as the RtVik advocates falsely say. The July 9 letter can not therefore be used as unambiguous evidence of how Srila Prabhupada intended the disciplic succession to go on in his absence. First of all, it does not contain Prabhupada’s direct words and, more importantly, it makes no direct mention his departure or how initiations were to go on after his departure. Krishnakant Desai can speculate and interpret and juggle words “henceforward” (from now until eternity), but the fact is that the July 9 letter says nothing about Prabhupada departure and how initiations were to go on thereafter or that is the question we are trying to answer.

Krishnakanta Desai asserts that if we say the July 9 letter was not written by Prabhupada that is like saying that Prabhupada’s books were not written by Prabhupada. That is not true. Srila Prabhupada’s books were either directly written by him or they were dictated by him on tapes which were transcribed and minimally edited. Those who typed the transcripts were typing Prabhupada’s words, not theirs, and the editors were editing Prabhupada’s words, not theirs. In his books, Srila Prabhupada chose his own words and always wrote about himself in the first person (I did this, or I said this) and not in the third person. He also listed himself as the author of his books. He did not let typists and editors like Jayadvaita Prabhu (now Swami) or Hayagriva Prabhu list themselves as the author, and merely sign his name “approved”.

On the other hand, what we have in the July 9 letter is Prabhupada’s secretary’s understanding of some things Prabhupada said on July 7 and May 28, written in the secretary’s own words.

Just to give some idea of how there is a difference between a letter directly written by Prabhupada and signed by him directly and a letter written by Prabhupada’s secretary and merely approved by him, we can consider the following:

## Letter to: All Centers

Los Angeles

16 December, 1973

73-12-16

Memo to All Centers

Repeatedly Srila Prabhupada says, “I only want my disciples to take this Movement seriously.” So, the punch line is that Prabhupada wants to initiate the following schedule:

1. Reside 4 months in India, 4 months in Europe and 4 months in the U.S.A. out of each year.
2. See or speak to no one except very important visitors wherever his is staying.
3. Be completely relieved of managerial affairs and have full time for translating.

What this means to us is the following:

1. Don’t ask Prabhupada to come to our Temple.
2. Solve all problems amongst ourselves and don’t burden Prabhupada with them.
3. Continue to advance dynamically in Krsna Consciousness by keeping all our principles very strictly and vigorously preach and propagate the movement around the world.

Now we have the GBC, the sannyasins, the presidents and so many qualified devotees. We have to give up the habit of placing everything on Prabhupada’s shoulders. We must be responsible, mature, steadfast and convinced. Wherever Prabhupada is staying he will deliver morning lectures. Presidents, etc., may visit there and go on the walks with Prabhupada. Other than that we must take care of all affairs. Enough said. The rest is up to us.

Haribol.

Your servant,

Karandhara das Adhikari

APPROVED: A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

KDA: kdd



# 100 deviations

[note: here Kaumodaki Devi Dasi typed the letter, which was written by Karandhara Prabhu, and it was signed approved by Prabhupada.

I can imagine that some of the disciples of Prabhupada who were not “very important” might have wondered about this letter. Is it really true that Prabhupada does not wish to see us, or let us go on walks with him? They probably would have liked to hear that directly from Prabhupada. And what about the temple presidents who are admonished not to invite Prabhupada to their centers? Sure, it is a letter from Prabhupada’s secretary, and there is Prabhupada’s signature-approved. But I suspect there were many temple presidents who might have thought, “Hmm. I would like to hear that from Prabhupada directly that he does not want me to invite him to my temple:”

So certainly there is a difference between a letter by Prabhupada’s secretary (even if signed “approved” by Prabhupada) and a letter written or dictated by Prabhupada himself. Maybe we’d like to see a tape of the conversation, or confirm it directly from Prabhupada just to be absolutely sure. Specifically regarding the July 9 letter, we have to be careful about trying to read between the lines and put all kinds of hidden meanings into particular words, which may not have been directly chosen by Prabhupada. Of course, in the case of the July 9 letter, we do have a copy of the conversations that inspired the letter (July 7 and May 28), so we can be fairly certain that in this case the secretary faithfully recorded, in a general sense, Prabhupada’s intentions. But nowhere in the May 28 conversation, and even more importantly, nowhere in the July 7 conversation, which was the immediate cause of the July 9 letter, do we find any statement by Prabhupada directing Tamala Krsna Goswami to say that Prabhupada was going to continue to initiate disciples after his physical departure. And, as one might expect, one therefore finds no direct mention at all of Prabhupada continuing to initiate disciples after his physical departure in the July 9 letter. Krishnakant Desai and his gullible followers may wish that such a thing was there. But it is not. It just is not there! Case closed! (Except for Krishnakanta Desai and his hardcore followers).

So whatever Tamala Krsna Goswami understood and wrote down in his own words was approved by Prabhupada, and Tamala Krsna Goswami certainly did not have the understanding that Prabhupada was saying he was going to continue to initiate disciples after his departure, especially after Prabhupada had just said on May 28 that his disciples were going to become regular gurus who would initiate their own disciples, who would be Prabhupada’s granddisciples, disciples of Prabhupada’s disciples. If it was Prabhupada’s desire on July 7 that he change the direction he gave on May 28, then he would have explicitly said that he would continue to initiate his own disciples after his physical departure, and Tamala Krsna Goswami should have written this into the letter. But nowhere (in Prabhupada’s entire life! ) is there any statement in which Prabhupada has said he would give initiation to disciples after his own physical departure. In particular, nothing like that is said in the July 7 conversation, which was the immediate cause for the July 9 letter being written.

There is not much more that really needs to be said on this subject, but as I predicted in my Thoughts on the RtVik Heresy, Krishnakanta Desai has continued and will continue to recycle his same old arguments. Krishnakanta Desai asks why I don’t quote anything from his paper. It’s simple. I cannot find anything in the document that is worth quoting. Srila Prabhupada is who we should be quoting. Not Krishnakanta Desai. I defy Krishnakanta Desai to produce any statement in which Prabhupada directly says in his own words, “I am going to continue to directly initiate diksa disciples after my physical departure from this world.” There is no such statement in the July 7 conversation, the July 9 letter or the May 28 conversation. In fact, in the May 28 conversation Prabhupada directly says that those taking initiation from the new gurus would be “disciple of my disciple” and “my granddisciple.” He also said that the gurus would be “regulargurus” but should wait until after his departure to accept disciples. It should not be done in the physical presence of Prabhupada. And that is exactly what Srila Prabhupada said from beginning to end, throughout his life.



## 5. Misrepresenting Srila Prabhupada's Will

### 57. Misrepresenting the expression "there is no need of any change"

### 58. Disregarding the chronology of events

### 59. Disregarding the fact that Srila Prabhupada never indicated that he wanted the "RtVik system" to continue after his disappearance

RtVik proponents say that Srila Prabhupada's will indicates that Srila Prabhupada wanted a RtVik system to continue after his disappearance. This is a totally unsubstantiated speculation. Let's analyze the facts.

From Srila Prabhupada's Declaration of Will, 4th June, 1977:

I, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, founder-acarya of the International Society for Krishna consciousness, Settlor of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, and disciple of Om Visnupada 108 Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Maharaja Prabhupada, presently residing at Sri Krsna-Balarama Mandir in Vrndavana, make this my last will:

**The Governing Body Commission (GBC) will be the ultimate managing authority of the entire International Society for Krishna Consciousness.** Each temple will be an ISKCON property and will be managed by three executive directors. The system of management will continue as it is now and there is no need of any change. RtVik proponents say that the "RtVik" system was Srila Prabhupada's chosen way of managing initiations within ISKCON. This statement is totally out of context and ignores at least three facts:

1. In the will Srila Prabhupada is talking about management of ISKCON properties by three executive directors, he is not talking about initiations.
2. The "RtVik system" was to be used only during Srila Prabhupada's physical presence. Srila Prabhupada never indicated that the system would continue after his physical disappearance. He always instructed that he wanted his disciples to become regular diksa gurus after his departure.
3. The will is written before the July 9 letter. Even if we apply for argument's sake the sentence "there is no need of any change" to the system of initiations, the sentence would totally invalidate the speculation that the July 9 letter contains indications on how to conduct initiations after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance, a subject that, by the way, is not even mentioned in the July 9 letter.

### 60. Concocting the meaning of the expression "my initiated disciple"

Another expression the RtVik mayavadis try to misuse is "my initiated disciple".

H.H. Jayadvaita Maharaja explains this in his *'Where the RtVik People are Wrong'*:

So now we come to the second piece of evidence, that phrase from Srila Prabhupada's will in which he stipulates that each new executive director for the ISKCON properties must be 'my initiated disciple.'

The logic, again, is that since Srila Prabhupada must have wanted to protect these properties forever, he must forever have direct disciples, initiated through a RtVik system. Again, please note that this logic works only for the "hard" form of RtVik doctrine (or for the "hard/soft" version), in which the RtVik system lasts forever. The "soft" version, in which the RtVik system lasts only until the appearance of qualified gurus, is ruled out: for the will to be followed, Srila Prabhupada must have direct disciples forever, through the agency of his RtViks (again, "these eleven").

### 61. Taking the expression "my initiated disciple" out of context

Even if one wants to go with a "hard/soft" RtVik doctrine, in which RtViks and pure devotees in Srila Prabhupada's line initiate side by side, one might wonder why the disciples of those pure devotees



# 100 deviations

are to be excluded from serving as executive directors. Is their initiation somehow less effective? Are they not equally connected with Srila Prabhupada? But this is a small point. Let us go on.

## 62 Disregarding the history of how the expression “my initiated disciple” got inserted in the will

Before we accept this phrase from Srila Prabhupada’s will as a clear sign of Srila Prabhupada’s intention for an eternally existing system of R̥tVik gurus, let us pause for a moment to see how that phrase got in there. Doing so won’t tip the scales one way or the other, but the history is interesting. It appears that the theme for the will arises ‘in Vṙndavana on May 27, 1977. That day, Giriraja Swami says to Srila Prabhupada: “This morning you gave the hint that there might be envious persons coming to take away our properties, so in the GBC meeting we discussed this point.” He then relates how a committee of devotees has come up with a “model trust deed” to protect the properties.

Introducing the text, Ramesvara Swami says, “This is based on the BBT Trust document that you wrote many years ago.” He then begins reading the new document. In the course of reading, he comes to the list of trustees for various temples, and gradually to those for Vṙndavana. “The proposed trustees are Aksayananda Swami, Gopala Krsna and Visvambhara.” Visvambhara Dayal (known as “Bhagatji”) was a devoted friend of ISKCON who rendered much service to Srila Prabhupada in Vṙndavana.

The following conversation ensues:

**Prabhupada:** *Visvambhara is not our regular disciple.*

**Jayapataka:** *Shouldn’t be included.*

**Prabhupada:** *Then he has to accept sannyasa from me.*

**Jayadr̥tha:** *Jaya.*

**Prabhupada:** *He should know...*

**Tamale Krsna:** *Become initiated.*

**Jayapataka:** *Trustee must be initiated disciple.*

**Prabhupada:** *Oh, yes.*

**Ramesvara:** *If he is seen... He could be on the advisory board.* **Prabhupada:** *No, you can say that “If you take sannyasa, you become on this.”*

**Tamale Krsna:** *So we’ll talk to him, and if he says no, then we’ll select another person and come back and tell you who our choice is.*

*A few days later, on June 2, devotees present Srila Prabhupada a revised draft.*

**Giriraja:** *So we drafted a will, including the trust for the properties of India and some of the other...*

**Prabhupada:** *Will? Will there will be direction that “Management should be done like this.” That’s all.*

**Giriraja:** *Yes.*

**Prabhupada:** *Nobody can say in court case that “This temple will be in charge of this person, this temple. . .”* **Ramesvara:** *Yes, just like you said.*

**Giriraja:** *So we’ve included those points...*

In the original draft, the successor trustees are simply “never less than three or more than five.” But in the second draft the devotees working on the document have added that the trust-ees, in this draft called “executive directors,” are to be “initiated disciples” following the regulative principles. Srila Prabhupada signs the will two days later. If after Srila Prabhupada disappeared he would cease to initiate, why did the devotees working on the document use the phrase “my initiated disciple”? Why not language that took into account that both Srila Prabhupada and his disciples would soon disappear?





## 63 Disregarding the testimony of the direct witnesses

“We weren’t used to thinking like that,” says Giriraja Swami. “In retrospect it’s very naive.” (personal interview, January 26, 1996)

But however the language came to be there, the will is signed by Srila Prabhupada, and it clearly says that each successor director should be Srila Prabhupada’s initiated disciple. So the argument still stands: How could a director generations from now be Srila Prabhupada’s disciple unless initiated by Srila Prabhupada’s RtVik?

Here opponents of p.s. RtVik doctrines might argue that we cannot accept the dictionary meaning of “disciple” but instead must offer an interpretation. When the dictionary meaning is clear, no interpretation is needed. But when the meaning is equivocal, an interpretation may be warranted.

Srila Prabhupada gives this example: One may say, “This is a residential quarter on the Ganges.” But then a question arises: “The Ganges is water, so how could there be houses the water?” The answer offered is that “on the Ganges” does mean literally on the water of the Ganges but rather “on the bank of the Ganges.”

Srila Prabhupada gives this as an example of a legitimate interpretation, offered when there is a legitimate need. One might argue, then, that since accepting the dictionary meaning of “disciple” would have the unexpected result requiring the entire system of guru parampara to be put aside here an interpretation is legitimately called for. In fact, however, no such interpretation is required. The dictionary does fine.

Going to the Oxford English Dictionary, we find that a disciple is “one who follows or attends upon another for the purpose of learning from him; a pupil or scholar.” More explicitly: personal pupil or follower of any religious or (in more recent use) other teacher or master.” This is the definition we’re most used to, and it’s the one the RtVik people have in mind. But there’s more. Here’s the next definition, equally valid “One who follows or is influenced by the doctrine or example of another; one who belongs to the ‘school’ of any leading thought.”

This is the sense in which anyone who wants to can, beyond a doubt, become Srila Prabhupada’s disciple. Any sincere person can follow Srila Prabhupada’s teachings and example. Anyone can join his school of thought, or, still further his International Society for Krishna Consciousness. And ultimately one can become not only his disciple in spirit but his “initiated disciple” through the guru-parampara system.

In this sense, by the grace of Srila Prabhupada, one can become not only his disciple but at the same time the disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, the six Goswamis, and all the other acarya in Srila Prabhupada’s line.

*“This,” as Srila Prabhupada writes (Bg. 18.75), “is the mystery of the disciplic succession.”* One is linked through the transparent medium of the bona fide spiritual master, but at the same time “the experience is still direct.” We might envision the day when those who believe they have become directly “initiated disciples” of Srila Prabhupada through a RtVik- or from a picture, or in a dream-might challenge in court that they alone have the right to serve as executive directors for ISKCON properties. Only the direct disciples are bona fide, they might claim, not those who profess to be merely disciples of his disciples in succession. We leave it for you to decide how well this would conform-legally and spiritually-to the intention of Srila Prabhupada’s will.

## 6. Imposing Conditions on Srila Prabhupada

### 64 Asking for signed orders

Some RtVik-vadis have come up with the notion that the spiritual master has to instruct his disciples in written and signed orders. This is a total concoction. Where in the scriptures is it said that an order of the guru is less valid if it is not written down on a paper and signed? The argument, besides being against tradition, is also self-defeating. To substantiate it they need to present a written and



signed order from Srila Prabhupada where he says that the guru needs to write down and sign his instructions. But where is such document? Nowhere.

Srila Prabhupada gave the qualifications of guru, and expressed his desire for all members of ISKCON to qualify as guru. Srila Prabhupada does not even say that the July 9 letter is the “final order”. The “final order” is merely an invention. “I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary work. At the same time I shall request them all to become spiritual masters. Every one of you should be spiritual master next.” (Hamburg, Sept 5, 1969)

Here Srila Prabhupada says that every disciple should become a spiritual master next. He didn't say that he ordered his disciples to become spiritual masters, still the meaning is the same. Any serious disciple will take the spiritual master's expressed desire as an order. Note also that Srila Prabhupada says “next.” That means his disciples should succeed him as diksa gurus. If he were merely referring to his disciples becoming siksa-gurus, as the RtVik-vadis claim, the use of the term “next” becomes redundant, as they were already acting as siksa gurus.

## 65 Concocting the necessity of a sentence including the word “order”

A Folio search didn't reveal even a single instance of Srila Prabhupada saying “I order... (something)” The RtVik-vadis impose the imaginary condition on Srila Prabhupada that he must express himself in a particular way. They propose that in instructing his disciples and communicating his desires he must use the term “order”, otherwise they will not accept his instructions. Srila Prabhupada, on the other hand, has repeatedly and consistently instructed his disciples to become spiritual masters after his departure. Whether or not he has done this using the expression “order” is totally irrelevant. Here are just a couple of examples:

“So far designation is concerned, the spiritual master authorizes every one of his disciples. But it is up to the disciple to carry out the order, able to carry out or not. It is not that spiritual master is partial, he designates one and rejects other. He may do that. If the other is not qualified, he can do that. But actually his intention is not like that. He wants that each and every one of his disciple become as powerful as he is or more than that. That is his desire.”

“If you are incapable of raising yourself to the standard of becoming spiritual master, that is not your spiritual master's fault, that is your fault. He wants, just like Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, amara ajnaya guru haya: “By My order, every one of you become a guru.” (San Diego, June 29, 1972)

## 66 Demanding absurd clarifications

Some RtVikmaya followers wrote:

“It needs to actually be proven through statements from Srila Prabhupada that he continually taught that he would stop being the guru upon his departure...”

What does it mean “stop being the guru”? Srila Prabhupada never stopped being the diksa guru for his disciples, and never stopped being the diksa guru for those who never took diksa from him. There is no question of stopping something that has never started. Whoever was initiated by Srila Prabhupada remained his disciple, whoever had not been initiated by Srila Prabhupada also remained so.

Are they really expecting to find a recorded statement where Srila Prabhupada says: “After leaving my body I will stop accepting disciples.” Do they expect such delirious statements? Did Srila Prabhupada specifically instruct that his servants should stop giving him medicines once he left his body? Their request is insane.

Srila Prabhupada was not going to make such obvious statements which are totally unnecessary for reasonable people. They are imposing some imaginative condition on Srila Prabhupada; he should have said that, he should have done that. Moreover, have any of the previous acaryas ever said: “After leaving the body I will stop accepting disciples”? Did Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura ever say that? The absence of such statements would, according to their “logic”, demonstrate that Srila Prabhupada's initiating disciples was illegitimate, as his spiritual master never expressly said that he would stop initiating after his departure.



## 67 Implying that Srila Prabhupada was unable to give clear instructions

What RtVikism indirectly implies is that Srila Prabhupada was incapable of leaving clear instructions behind him. If Srila Prabhupada wanted a post-samadhi proxy-initiation system, he could have plainly said so in his books, letters, lectures, conversations, etc. A single statement would have been enough; something like: “the disciples I have appointed to accept disciples on my behalf will continue to accept disciples on my behalf even after my physical departure. I shall remain as the only diksa guru for all devotees in ISKCON.” Of course, such statement, or similar ones, do not exist. What exists is a multitude of statements in which Srila Prabhupada presents the eternal system of disciplic succession.

RtVikvadis are therefore offending Srila Prabhupada by implying that he didn’t have the ability or intelligence to properly express his instructions.

## 68 Fabricating the idea that Srila Prabhupada thought that his disciples weren’t qualified

Some RtVikvadis want to make the following conversation into the evaluation of Srila Prabhupada of his disciples as late as 22 April 1977:

**Tamala Krsna:** *Well, I have studied myself and all of your disciples, and it’s clear fact that we are all conditioned souls, so we cannot be guru. Maybe one day it may be possible...*

**Prabhupada:** *Hm.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *...but not now.*

**Prabhupada:** *Yes. I shall choose some guru. I shall say, “Now you become acarya. You become authorized.” I am waiting for that. You become all acarya. I retire completely. But the training must be complete.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *The process of purification must be there. Prabhupada: Oh, yes, must be there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu wants that. Amara ajnaya guru liana. “You become guru. “ (laughs) But be qualified. Little thing, strictly follower...*

Taking the above as the only evaluation of his disciples by Srila Prabhupada is a clear example of omitting other evidence, the logical fallacy known as “proof by selected instance”. In another conversation that took place just a week before, on 15 April 1977, Srila Prabhupada expressed confidence in his disciples and encouraged them when they humbly presented themselves as unqualified:

**Prabhupada:** *Every one of us messiah. Anyone Krsna conscious, he’s the messiah. Every one. Why one? All of us. Gaurangera bhakta jane, jane jane sakti dhari, brahmada tari saksi(?): “The devotee of Lord Caitanya, every one has so immense power that every one, they can deliver the whole universe.” Gaurangera bhaktajane, jane sakti dhari, brahmada tari...That is Gauranga’s men.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *Only you are that powerful, Srila Prabhupada. We’re like...*

**Prabhupada:** *Why you are not? You are my disciples.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *We’re like the bugs.*

**Prabhupada:** *“Like father, like son.” You should be. Gaurangera bhakta..., jane. Everyone. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa. He asked everyone, “Just become guru.” Follow His instruction. You become guru. Amara ajnaya. Don’t manufacture ideas. Amara ajnaya. “What I say, you do. You become a guru. “ Where is the difficulty? “And what is Your ajna?” Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa. Bas. Everything is there in the Bhagavad gita. You simply repeat. That’s all. You become guru. To become a guru is not difficult job. Follow Caitanya Mahaprabhu and speak what Krsna has said. Bas. You become guru. “Bas. So much for the “In 1977 Srila Prabhupada thought that no disciple was qualified to be diksa guru” theory.*



## 69 Speculating that Srila Prabhupada would have seen the future and therefore must have acted differently

An argument we often hear from proponents of RtVikism is:

“In the past gurus have fallen, and this has created havoc in our society and in the lives of individual devotees. Srila Prabhupada must have seen the future and knew that that would have happened.

Therefore, Srila Prabhupada cannot have wanted gurus in ISKCON”.

First of all this argument is speculative and not based on any reference to sadhu-guru-sastra, and therefore should be rejected. The argument shows its inconsistency when applied to other areas in which Srila Prabhupada’s followers had difficulty in fulfilling his desires.

One could say, for instance: “Srila Prabhupada must have predicted that marriages would have so many problems, therefore he really cannot have wanted a grhastha-asrama in ISKCON...”

“Srila Prabhupada must have predicted that there will be problems in the gurukula, therefore he really cannot have wanted a gurukula system in ISKCON...”

Srila Prabhupada must have predicted that so many temples would face problems of management and maintenance, therefore he really cannot have wanted temples in ISKCON...” Srila Prabhupada must have predicted that there will be difficulties in protecting cows, therefore he really cannot have wanted cow protection in ISKCON...” etc. etc. the list goes on and on.

In other words, RtVikvadis disregard Srila Prabhupada’s stated desire and then offhandedly say: “Oh, Srila Prabhupada must have seen the future...” substituting their speculations for the Founder-Acarya’s direct, unambiguous directions. A true follower keeps in mind the instructions of the guru and works toward fulfilling the guru’s desire, even in spite of challenges and obstacles. So why pointing out only the difficulties or failures some individuals had in their service as spiritual masters?

In the words of Srila Prabhupada (San Diego, 29 June, 1972):

“So far designation is concerned, the spiritual master authorizes every one of his disciples. But it is up to the disciple to carry out the order, able to carry out or not. ...If you are incapable of raising yourself to the standard of becoming spiritual master, that is not your spiritual master’s fault, that is your fault. He wants, just like Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, amara ajnaya guru liana, “By My order, every one of you become a guru. “

Another aspect is that ISKCON’s future doesn’t stop 20 years from Srila Prabhupada’s disappearance; therefore one should not come to hasty conclusions on what the future holds.

## 70 Proclaiming that Srila Prabhupada wanted something he never mentioned as the system for the next 10,000 years

Did any guru in any bona fide sampradaya continue to initiate disciples after his or her physical presence? How can we ever accept something that nobody ever talked about? But the RtVik-advocates sustain: “Srila Prabhupada must have wanted to remain the diksa guru for ISKCON, otherwise he should have said the contrary!” With the same “logic” we could pro pose literally unlimited speculations on what Srila Prabhupada wanted. RtVikists are reduced to declare something that Srila Prabhupada never even mentioned as the system for the next 10,000 years.

## 71 Putting words in Srila Prabhupada’s lotus mouth

A RtVik proponent wrote, about the May 28 conversation:

“Srila Prabhupada then finishes by saying that they would be gurus if he orders them, and should he ever do so they would then be disciples of his disciples.”

A faithful report of what Srila Prabhupada said? The transcription reads:

“When I order, “You become guru, “ he becomes regular guru. That’s all. He becomes disciple of my disciple.” This is Metamorphosis at its best. “When” is here twisted into “it” and the sentence “should he ever do so” magically manifests. In other words, to support their doctrine with Srila Prabhu pada’s words they have to put these words into Srila Prabhupada’s mouth themselves.



## 72 Forcing Srila Prabhupada to remain as diksa-guru

Srila Prabhupada never said that he wanted to remain as diksa-guru for the next 10,000 years. On the contrary Srila Prabhu pada has always preached about the parampara system.

Mohsin Hassan: After you, is it any decision has been made who will take over?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. All of them will take over. These students, who are initiated from me, all of them will act as I am doing. Just like I have got many Godbrothers, they are all acting. Similarly, all these disciples which I am making, initiating, they are being trained to become future spiritual masters. (Conversation, Detroit, 18 July, 1971) RtVikists therefore try to force Srila Prabhupada to remain the diksa guru for ISKCON when he specifically expressed a different desire.

## 73. Maintaining that Srila Prabhupada nullified everything he ever taught with one single ambiguous adverb (henceforward), in one single letter not even written by himself

The above is simply absurd.

## 7. Putting forward fallacious arguments

In “Where the RtVik People are Wrong”, H.H. Jayadvaita Swami writes: Let’s examine these arguments one by one.

## 74. Argument from restatement of what’s accepted

Devotees have sometimes announced that they have “irrefutable proof” of the RtVik guru system. They then offer into evidence various quotes in which Srila Prabhupada speaks of appointing, RtViks. Next comes the document in which Srila Prabhupada actually appoints them, and then letters in which Srila Prabhupada makes clear to the, RtViks their duties. Then further evidence: testimony from senior devotees that Srila Prabhupada did indeed appoint RtVik gurus. On top of this we are offered a careful tracing of history:

Srila Prabhupada gradually handed things over—first the performance of fire yajnas, then the chanting on beads, and finally the actual acceptance of candidates and giving of spiritual names. Yet through all of this, we are reminded, the new initiates were always disciples of Srila Prabhupada, and no one else.

And then comes the conclusion: In the face of such an overwhelming body of evidence, how can one deny that Srila Prabhupada did indeed establish the RtVik guru system?

The answer, of course, is simple: What the argument succeeds in proving is what everyone already accepts. That Srila Prabhupada appointed, RtVik gurus and established a “RtVik-guru system” is not in dispute. Everyone agrees about it.

The argument, therefore, entirely misses the issue. What’s at issue is whether Srila Prabhupada intended some form of RtVik guru system to continue after his physical departure.

Some people seem to think that merely offering more and more evidence that Srila Prabhupada set up a RtVik guru system somehow makes the case for a post-samadhi RtVik guru system stronger and stronger. It doesn’t. If one wanted to prove the existence of two-headed pigeons, no amount of evidence that there are pigeons would be enough. That pigeons exist is something we already know. What would need to be shown is that some of them have two heads. Arguments proving again and again what’s already accepted do nothing to settle the issue at hand. When used knowingly and deliberately, such arguments are a form of cheating. When used innocently, they are merely irrelevant. So let’s leave this behind and go on.

## 75. Argument from personal testimony

We now come to an argument that is relevant: the personal testimony of devotees who say they heard before Srila Prabhupada’s departure that Srila Prabhupada had set up a post samadhi RtVik guru system.





Gauridasa Pandita, one of Srila Prabhupada's disciples, tells us that while serving as an assistant to His Holiness Tamala Krsna Goswami in Vrndavana, on or about May 23, 1977, he directly heard Srila Prabhupada tell Tamala Krsna Goswami that the appointed rtviks should continue to serve as ,RtViks even after Srila Prabhupada's departure. This conversation, he tells us, was even recorded on tape.

In addition, Yasodanandana Dasa tells us that in May 1977 Tamala Krsna Goswami and Bhavananda Goswami indicated to him that Srila Prabhupada had endorsed a post-samadhi RtVik guru system. Yasodanandana Prabhu offers a diary in which he noted this at the time.

When we come to this sort of testimony, several questions are naturally relevant: How many witnesses are testifying? How reliable are their accounts? How well do they agree with one another?

From the beginning, then, this argument is in trouble. How many people claim to have heard directly from Srila Prabhupada that Srila Prabhupada wanted this system? Only one. He was a junior man, not a leading devotee, Srila Prabhupada was not confiding in him directly, and though we have nothing bad we wish to say of him he has not especially distinguished himself by his record of devotional service. Moreover, for some reason he held back his testimony until many years after Srila Prabhupada left.

Most important, Gauridasa Pandita, for all his good qualities, may still be subject to the four frailties common to all conditioned souls: imperfect senses, a tendency to make mistakes, a tendency to fall into illusion, and a propensity to cheat.

Yasodanandana Dasa, of course, is presumably subject to the same four shortcomings. And apart from this, a serious concern is that his testimony is second hand. If the tape recording Gauridasa speaks of has ever existed, it has never been found. One may obliquely suggest that some-one must have deliberately erased it. But in any case, evidence that doesn't exist is no evidence at all. What we are left with, then, is mainly Gauridasa's lone report. And according to Tamala Krsna Goswami, the other person allegedly present, what Gauridasa tells us is wrong. At best, then, the evidence from personal testimony is equivocal and weak.

Here, perhaps is the place to bring forward a point made by Tamala Krsna Maharaja and approvingly quoted in several papers by proponents of post-samadhi RtVik guru doctrines. At a meeting in Topanga Canyon in 1980, Tamala Krsna Maharaja stated that Srila Prabhupada had never appointed the eleven RtViks to be anything more than RtViks. "If it had been more than that," he said, "you can bet your bottom dollar that Prabhupada would have spoken for days and hours and weeks on end about how to set up this thing with the gurus, but he didn't..."

The same point about how Srila Prabhupada let us know what he wanted is relevant here. If he had wanted a RtVik guru system to continue after his departure, would we have expect ad him to have said so merely once in private to his secretary, or would he have spoken about it with his leading devotees "for days and hours and weeks on end"?

For those familiar with how Srila Prabhupada did things, the answer should be easy. This is a point we shall return to later. But for now let us move on.

## 76. Argument from logical necessity

Another line of reasoning begins with a critique-much of it valid-of Srila Prabhupada's leading disciples and their failings after his departure. None of Srila Prabhupada's disciples, it is argued, is now fit to serve as a bona fide spiritual master. And scriptural arguments are offered to support this point of view. Therefore, the argument continues, since no one else is fit, the only person of whom we can safely take shelter is Srila Prabhupada himself.

Srila Prabhupada knew the limitations of his disciples, and he must have known what would happen. Therefore, the argument concludes, he must have set up the RtVik guru system. The response to this argument is simple: It is speculative and should therefore be rejected. A speculation may be rea-sonable or unreasonable, but Srila Prabhupada taught us to rely on authority, not on speculation.



Moreover, this speculation is logically defective. To dis-pose of it, we need not decide whether Srila Prabhupada's disciples are fit or unfit, or whether they "received the order" to become guru or not. Nor do we need to discuss what the credentials of a bona fide spiritual master should be. (These are important topics, but they are not the topic at hand.) Suppose for the moment that Srila Prabhupada's disciples are all indeed unfit. It does not therefore logically follow that Srila Prabhupada must have (note the speculative language) set up a post-samadhi RtVik guru system.

Instead, if he found his disciples all unfit, he could have blessed one or more to quickly attain spiritual perfection. Or he could have declared that henceforward Krsna Himself, or the Bhagavatam itself, or the holy name itself would be the spiritual master. Or he could have simply left everything up to Krsna. The point is that it's not enough to talk about what Srila Prabhupada could have done or must have done. We have to see what Srila Prabhupada actually did.

To argue that Srila Prabhupada must have set up a RtVik-guru system and that the evidence for this is so scanty only because it must have been suppressed and covered up is merely to take the speculation one step further.

And speculating is not the way Srila Prabhupada told us to do things. One who wants to take shelter of Srila Prabhupada, therefore, should avoid taking shelter of speculations. Coming back to a point on which all agree, we should all take shelter of Srila Prabhupada and his instructions. Srila Prabhupada is the exalted pure devotee who gave us the Krsna consciousness movement. We can all be completely confident of his instructions and his example. And we can be sure that by strictly and sincerely following Srila Prabhupada we will always be safe and secure.

But we must follow Srila Prabhupada as he himself instruct ad us to follow. We must follow Srila Prabhupada and those who follow Srila Prabhupada, not the speculations of others. This brings us to the next argument.

## 77 Argument from the virtues of the doctrines

The next argument is really just an extension of the previous one: Srila Prabhupada must have set up a ,RtVik guru system, because the system has so many advantages. "Just see all the benefits of this system," declare the advocates of this point of view. "How much better it would be than the alternatives."

Or the same argument is put in negative form: We are in trouble and perplexity only because we have failed to take up this wonderful system.

To make it all clear to us, the advocates sometimes offer charts showing us the benefits their system would bring, compared to the bad points of what's going on now. But those who have learned from history will refuse to be lured. The one-appointed acarya system of the Gaudiya Matha, the zonal acarya system of ISKCON-both looked so good. They seemed to offer so many advantages. Or the alternatives seemed so bleak.

For many, only in retrospect could those fine-looking systems be recognized as deviations and therefore causes of disaster. But, again, what Srila Prabhupada trained us to do was not to evaluate all the possibilities, choose what seems to us to have the most points going for it, and then conclude that this must have been what he wanted. What he trained us to do was to strictly follow what he taught us.

If there's one lesson we should have learned from history it should be this: However good a path of action may seem, if it's against what Srila Prabhupada taught us, forget it.

## 78 Argument from a lack of counter-evidence

Where, it is demanded, has the sastra or Srila Prabhupada said that one can't approach an acarya for initiation merely because he has physically departed? Where do the authorities tell us that a post-samadhi RtVik system is no good? Can you show me a verse? Can you point to a purport? How then can you say it's not valid?

This is simply a classic argumentative blunder, a textbook fallacy.



# 100 rt'vik deviations

“How do we know that you don’t beat your wife?” demands the rumor-monger. And then you’re stuck there, trying to come up with evidence to counter a groundless accusation. How do you know there’s not a celestial planet controlled by a three-legged grasshopper with seven heads and superhuman intelligence? Can you show me a verse that refutes it? Can you point to a purport? How can you prove it’s not bona fide to take initiation from the ghost of Aristotle’s mother or a picture of a self realized boa constrictor?

One must support one’s views by evidence, not by assertions that a lack of counter evidence makes them true. Enough said. We now come to another argument we can deal with quickly.

## 8. Refusing to acknowledge valid arguments

In “Where the RtVik People are Wrong” H.H. Jayadvaita Maharaja writes:

### 79 Argument from a need for evidence

This argument is simple. As Srila Prabhupada taught us, the process of speaking in spiritual circles is to say something upheld by authorities.

Our authorities are guru, sadhu, and sastra. For us to accept that post samadhi RtVik guru theories are right, we should see statements in which guru, sadhu, and sastra directly endorse them. We don’t. Therefore, the theories should be rejected. A first-class appeal to authority does not consist of authoritative statements linked with a line of logic: “Therefore he could have... Therefore, he must have...” It consists of a clear, unequivocal statement that directly supports what you’re trying to show.

What statements of this kind are available to support the p.s. ,rhvik guru doctrines? None. Therefore, the doctrines should be discarded.

Please note that the argument here is different from the “argument from a lack of counter evidence” rejected before. We are not saying, “X is true. Prove that it isn’t.” It’s not “You beat your wife. Prove that you don’t.” Rather, it’s “If you believe that X is true, please show that it is.” “Oh, do I beat my wife? All right, what’s the evidence?”

Neither from guru nor sadhu nor sastra do the post samadhi ,RtVik guru doctrines have any evidence going for them. Therefore we should reject them.

### 80 Argument from a need to show precedent

Again, a simple argument.

Srila Prabhupada usually did what was done by the predecessor acaryas. And never in the history of Gaudiya Vaisnavism, nor any other form of Vaisnavism, have we found any instance of a post-samadhi rt’vik guru system. Yes, Srila Prabhupada could have put in place an unprecedented system. He could have done anything. But the lack of precedent gives a good reason to doubt that he did.

### 81 Argument from a need for good logic

The reasons given for accepting the post-RtVik guru doctrines are poor. And why should we accept doctrines backed by poor reasons? We shouldn’t.

### 82 Argument from a need for consistency with Srila Prabhupada’s teachings

The post RtVik doctrines require us to accept that Srila Prabhupada, in his last few months, reversed what he’d taught for the previous ten years.

“One who is now the disciple is the next spiritual master.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.9.43p)

“Every student is expected to become acarya. Acarya means one who knows the scriptural injunctions and follows them practically in life, and teaches them to his disciples... Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bona fide guru, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of the spiritual master you bring the prospective



disciples to him and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession.” (Letter to Tusta Krsna Swami, December 2, 1975; emphasis supplied “So we have got this message from Krsna, from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, from the six Gosvamis, later on Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Bhaktisiddhanta Thakura. And we are trying our bit also to distribute this knowledge. Now, tenth, eleventh, twelfth... My Gusu Maharaja is tenth from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, I am eleventh, you are the twelfth. So distribute this knowledge.” (Los Angeles arrival lecture, May 18, 1972) Commenting on the letter to Tusta Krsna Maharaja, a treatise advocating a p.s. ,RtVik doctrine says, “All the letter states is the normal process of disciplic succession: Guru departs and a qualified disciple continues initiating.” The treatise then argues that because no one was qualified, Srila Prabhupada set up a p.s. RtVik system.

The faulty argument that since no one was qualified Srila Prabhupada “must have” set up a new system has been previously disposed of. What I want to focus on here is a simple point: That a spiritual master initiates until his departure and then his disciples initiate next is the normal system. On this we are all in agreement. This is what Srila Prabhupada taught the entire time he was with us.

The p.s. RtVik doctrines require us to accept that Srila Prabhupada in contradiction to more than ten years of his own consistent teaching suddenly put aside the normal system and replaced it with a new innovation.

Asking us to accept this is simply asking too much.

## 83 Argument from Srila Prabhupada’s final instruction

On May 28, 1977, when a deputation of GBC members asked Srila Prabhupada how initiations would go on after Srila Prabhupada’s physical departure, his last words on the subject were these:

“When I order you become guru, he becomes regular guru. That’s all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. Just see.” “Disciple of my disciple.” The meaning is clear, and it’s consistent with Srila Prabhupada always taught us. For those who refuse to see it, no amount of argument will help. For the rest of us, there it is.

## 84 Argument from how Srila Prabhupada expressed his desires

Here is the place to recall, one last time, that when Srila Prabhupada wanted to do something different and new, he spared no pains to make himself clear. As his disciples will remember, when His Divine Grace had an important point to make, he would drive it into our thick heads again and again and again. If Srila Prabhupada had wanted to initiate even after his physical departure, he wouldn’t have merely disclosed this privately to only one conspiratorially minded disciple. Or packed it all into one pregnant word. Or left it for us to infer from a phrase about property directors.

Had Srila Prabhupada wanted to revolutionize the entire parampara system, you can bet your bottom dollar he would have spoken about it for days and hours and weeks on end. But he didn’t, because he simply expected us to follow the normal system he had taught us for the past ten years. Asking us to believe anything to the contrary is, again, simply asking too much.

## 85 Argument from the need to reject new doctrines

Srila Prabhupada entered samadhi in 1977. Post-samadhi RtVik guru doctrines began appearing only in the mid-1980’s. After all the troubles we’ve been through since Srila Prabhupada’s departure, after all the concoctions, after all the disasters, now we are supposed to put our faith in a truth that came to light only years after Srila Prabhupada physically left us. The teaching about parampara we all understood and re pealed and agreed about till 1977, and for years after out the window it goes.

Now, with no precedent from sastra, no example from previous acaryas, no clear and public instruction from Srila Prabhupada himself, we are supposed to set aside the normal sq. tam Srila Prabhupada taught us the whole time he was physically here. And we’re supposed to buy into something entirely opposite, a new doctrine that has sprung up, amidst a swirl o controversy, half a decade or more after His Divine Grace ha physically left.

As Srila Prabhupada used to say, “And I have to believe it?”



# 100 Deviations

Please, that's asking far too much.

## 9. Disregarding the GBC Authority

### 86 Disregarding Srila Prabhupada's instruction to follow the GBC

*"The Governing Body Commission (GBC) will be the ultimate managing authority of the entire International Society for Krishna Consciousness."*

This is the first point in Srila Prabhupada's will. RtVik-vadis conduct their propaganda in open violation of it.

### 87 Preaching a bogus doctrine

Since 1990 the GBC has included the rtvik speculations in the category of "Specifically Outlawed Doctrines and Practices":

*"The doctrine that Srila Prabhupada continues to initiate direct diksa disciples after his departure from this world through officiating priests (RtViks) is a dangerous philosophical deviation. It is totally prohibited in ISKCON. No devotee shall participate in such posthumous RtVik initiation ceremonies in any capacity including acting as RtVik, initiate, assistant, organizer, or financier. No ISKCON devotee shall advocate or support its practice." (ISKCON law 8.5.7.2)*

### 88 Saying that a guru working under the GBC is "relativized"

The pro-RtViks claim that the guru should be "independent of mundane rules" and "beyond all ecclesiastical considerations", and therefore a guru cannot be under the authority of the GBC Body.

The guru is first of all a disciple, who has to follow the instructions of Srila Prabhupada. One of Srila Prabhupada's instructions is to work under the GBC. Following the orders of the spiritual master cannot be considered a mundane or ecclesiastical consideration. So how can someone legitimately think that if a guru has to follow the GBC Body, which is the instruction of Srila Prabhupada, it is a limitation upon him that will relativize his position to his disciples? Besides this, the GBC Body is a group of senior Vaisnavas and working under the jurisdiction of senior Vaisnavas has always been existing in the Vaisnava-sampradaya.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura states in his work Srv Godru-ma-kalpatavi that he worked under a eleven-member pancayat which was directing the activities of the name-Ivat,ta. But that does not in any way diminish the stature of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. Rather it reveals his glorious quality of being a servant of the servant of the Lord.

Srila Prabhupada himself would have been working under a GBC if the Gaudiya Matha had followed Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura's instruction to establish a Governing Body. Srila Prabhupada often stated that the reason why the Gaudiya Matha failed was that it disobeyed the orders of Srila Bhakti-siddhanta Sarasvati Thakura to form a Governing Body and work under such a Governing Body. Had a Governing Body existed in the mission of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura after his disappearance, Srila Prabhupada himself would have worked under it. But that would not have minimized the stature and self-effulgence of Srila Prabhupada, just as working under the eleven member pancayat of the nama-hatta did not diminish the stature of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura.

### 89 Accusing the GBC of creating "lower" standards

Some pro-RtViks say that the diksa guru is one who "embraces Krsna," that he is "in direct contact with the Supersoul," etc. These people claim that the GBC criterion of being a guru. is a "low-level" standard. However, if we examine the teachings of Srila Prabhupada as well as his example, we do not find that to be the case. The GBC's standard is not a "low level" standard but an objective standard that is strictly in accordance with the guidelines given to us by Srila Prabhupada.

Here is one quote from Srila Prabhupada:

*"One does not become spiritual master by his own whims. That is no spiritual master. He must be ordered by superior authority. Then he's spiritual master. Amara ajnaya. Just like in our case."*





# 100 गुरु वैचक्षण्य

*Our superior authority, our spiritual master, he ordered me that “You just try to preach this gospel, what-ever you have learned from me, in English.” So we have tried it. That’s all. It is not that I am very much qualified. The only qualification is that I have tried to execute the order of superior authority. That’s all. This is the secret of success.” (London, August 3, 1973)*

Here Srila Prabhupada has given an objective, verifiable criterion. Why is he a spiritual master? Because he has “tried to execute the order of superior authority.” “That’s all.” That is the criterion for being a guru: simply following the order of “superior authority.”

Srila Prabhupada doesn’t say anything about that he should be accepted as a guru because he is “embracing Krsna,” etc. He says clearly that the reason why he is a guru is because he strictly follows the superior authority.

Srila Prabhupada accepted Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura as his guru. Why? Let us listen to his own reason why he accepted Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura as his spiritual master:

*“In this connection we may call to memory the time when I was fortunate enough to meet His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada, sometime in the year 1922. Srila Prabhupada had come from Calcutta to Sridhama Mayapur to start the missionary activities of the Gaudiya Matha. He was sitting in a house at Ulta Danga when through the inducement of an intimate friend, the late Sriman Narendranatha Mallika, I had the opportunity to meet His Divine Grace for the first time. I do not remember the actual date of the meeting, but at that time I was one of the managers of Dr. Base’s laboratory in Calcutta. I was a newly married young man, addicted to Gandhi’s movement and dressed in khadi. Fortunately, even at our first meeting, His Divine Grace advised me to preach the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in English in the Western countries. Because at that time I was a complete nationalist, a follower of Mahatma Gandhi’s, I submitted to His Divine Grace that unless our country were freed from foreign subjugation, no one would hear the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu seriously. Of course, we had some argument on this subject, but at last I was defeated and convinced that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s message is the only panacea for suffering humanity. I was also convinced that the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was then in the hands of a very expert devotee and that surely the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu would spread all over the world. I could not, however immediately take up his instructions to preach, but I took his words very seriously and was always thinking of how to execute his order, although I was quite unfit to do so.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, “Concluding Words”)*

Srila Prabhupada doesn’t say that he accepted Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati as his guru because “he was from Vaikuntha” etc. He later expressed his realization about Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati: “What can I say? He is a Vaikuntha man!” But he never stated this as the criterion for accepting a spiritual master. The reason he accepted Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati was simply because “the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was then in the hands of a very expert devotee.” Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati was presenting the message of Lord Caitanya expertly and purely and that was why he accepted him as his spiritual master.

There are two very important reasons why we cannot accept the criteria for someone to be a guru as “being able to see Krishna,” etc.

- 1.No Vaisnava who is seeing Krsna will generally out of his humility admit that he is seeing Krsna.
- 2.Neophyte devotees cannot understand the level of realization of the devotee. Therefore, even if a Vaisnava tells someone that he is seeing Krsna, how will the listener know for certain whether or not it is true?

So how can we set the standard of accepting the guru as something vague and subjective, like someone who has been embraced by Krsna? When Arjuna in the Bhagavad gita asked Krsna how he could know a self-realized person, Krsna didn’t tell him to look for a person who had been embraced by Krsna. On the contrary He gave clear, verifiable symptoms by which such a person can be known. Thus, it is seen that the GBC’s system of setting an objective criteria for acceptance of guru is in



accordance with the statements of Srila Prabhupada. It is not a “low standard” as some pro-RtViks would like us to believe, but strictly according to guru, sadhu and sastra.

## 10. Inventing Doctrines

### 90 “Only a liberated soul can become guru”

*“This Krsna consciousness movement directly receives instructions from the Supreme Personality of Godhead via persons who are strictly following His instructions. Although a follower may not be a liberated person, if he follows the supreme, liberated Personality of Godhead, his actions are naturally liberated from the contamination of the material nature. Lord Caitanya therefore says: ‘By My order you may become a spiritual master.’ One can immediately become a spiritual master by having full Faith in the transcendental words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and by following His instructions.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.18.5p)*

### 91 “The acarya can change sastras”

Sometimes, upon being confronted with the total lack of sastric support for their doctrine, RtVikists resort to another speculation: “Well, the acarya can change sastra. “This is completely opposite to the very definition of acarya, as given by Srila Prabhupada:

*“Guru means he must be abiding by the rules and regulation of the sastra. Sadhu-guru-sastra. Sadhu means one who is obeying the rules and regulation of sastra. Sastra must be the medium. Without sastra nothing is acceptable. That is spoken by Krsna. Tasmad sastra-vidhanoktah. Yah sastra-vidhim utsrjya vartate kama-karatah. So nobody can transgress the rules and regulation of sastra, and what to speak of guru. Guru is acarya. Acinoti yalv sastrani. One who knows the rules and regulation of the sastra and he teaches his disciple according to the sastra, he is called acarya. “(Srila Prabhupada’s lecture, Vrndavana, 5 October, 1976)*

*“Therefore the Vedic literature says that you have to follow the footprints of great acaryas. Acarya means great devotees who come to teach the people in general about God consciousness or Krsna consciousness. He is called acarya. He behaves in his life how? To think of Krsna and he teaches his students about that. He is called acarya. Acinoti sastrani. He knows the purport of the scriptures, and he behaves in his life and he teaches his student in that way. He is called acarya. (Srila Prabhupada’s lecture, New York, 16 December, 1966)*

*“Guru means the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Acaryam mam vijaniyan navamanyeta karhicit. “Acarya, “Krsna says, main vijaniyat: “he is Myself. I am. Because he is My perfect representative, he won’t speak anything nonsense; he will speak something or everything which he has heard from Me -therefore he is acarya... Acarya means one who knows the sastra and practically uses in his life, and the same thing, he teaches to his disciple.*

*That is called acarya. Aearva is not a self-made man, no. Acarya means acinoti yah sastrani. One who understand the sastra, the Vedic sastra, and practices in life and teaches the same thing to his student. That is called acarya.” (Srila Prabhupada’s lecture, 9 January, 1975)*

So the acarya “won’t speak anything nonsense”, he speaks according to sastra.

Besides, Srila Prabhupada never even hinted at changing anything regarding the traditional system of guru-parampara as presented in the sastra.

### 92 Misuse of the expression “I am in my books”

Some pro-RtViks say that since Srila Prabhupada is in his books, we can directly be in contact with him and therefore he is our current link. However, this is an incorrect conclusion. Not only Prabhupada, but all of our previous acaryas are in their books because the spiritual master is present in vapul,v and vani. The instructions in the writings of the previous acaryas constitute the vani and therefore they are still present and available to us in their vani form for us to take shelter.



# 100 deviations

“Actually going to Vrndavana involves taking shelter of the six Gosvamis by reading Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu, Vidagdha-madhava, Lalita-madhava and the other books that they have given.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila 8.31p) From this we can understand that one can take shelter of the six Gosvamis by reading their books. But that doesn’t mean that we can bypass the spiritual master or the representative of the six Gosvamis and attempt to directly take initiation from the six Gosvamis. Similarly, reading the books of Srila Prabhupada is not sufficient; one requires a living spiritual master representing Srila Prabhupada, who can give spiritual initiation and accept our service on behalf of the parampara:

*“Or even if you read some books, you cannot understand unless you understand it from me. This is called parampara system.” (Srila Prabhupada lecture December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1973) “One should not proudly think that one can understand the transcendental loving service of the Lord simply by reading books. One must become a servant of a Vaisnava. One must accept a Vaisnava guru (adau gurv-asrayam), and then by questions and answers one should gradually learn what pure devotional service to Krsna is. That is called the parampara system.” (Sra Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila 7.54p) And again in answering a question from an Indian lady at his lecture in London, on September 23, 1969:*

**Indian lady:** How does one contact the spiritual master?

Through a book can you contact the spiritual master?

**Prabhupada:** No, you have to associate.

**Syamasundara:** “Can you associate through a book?” she asked.

**Prabhupada:** Yes”through books, and also personal. Because when you make a spiritual master you have got personal touch. Not that in air you make a spiritual master. You make a spiritual master concrete. So as soon as you make a spiritual master, you should be inquisitive.

From the above, it is clear that we need a living spiritual master to help us understand and apply the books of Srila Prabhupada.

## 93“Gurus can’t fall”

The guru is a devotee serving as initiating and/or instructing spiritual master. There is no reason to believe that he or she cannot have problems.

Srila Prabhupada explains:

*“A spiritual master must be very careful in this regard. Such business is going on all over the world. The spiritual master does not accept a materially opulent disciple just to advertise the fact that he has such a big disciple. He knows that by associating with such visayi disciples, he may fall down. One who accepts a visayi disciple is not a bona fide spiritual master. Even if he is, his position may be damaged due to association with an unscrupulous vitsayi. “ (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila 24.330p)*

Srila Prabhupada elaborates on the temptations affecting even great personalities:

*“This sex life in this material world is so strong, even in the heavenly planets. Big, big ,rsis. Sex life with animals also there is... Sex life is so strong. Man cohabiting with animal. It makes blind. Vyasadeva made one of her (his) students pregnant, what to speak of ourselves. Vyasadeva was born, Satyavati. She was low class. Although she was born by a king, but her mother was a low-class fisherwoman. And the fisherman raised her as daughter. And Parasara Muni became attracted. And Vyasadeva was born. Sex affairs, just see, in the highest circle. Brhaspati, the spiritual master of the devatas, he became so much mad for his brother’s wife who was pregnant, and forcibly they had sex. Just see. These are examples. Brahma became attracted with his daughter. Lord Siva became attracted with the beauty of Mohini murti, even in the presence of his wife.” (Room Conversation, Bombay, 7 January, 1977)*



## 94 Misuse of the expression “uttama-adhikari” in the purport of Nectar of Instruction, verse 5

Some pro-RtViks concoct a new doctrine about gurus and uttama-adhikaris. First of all, they point out the following statement of Srila Prabhupada as found in his purport to the fifth verse of the Nectar of Instruction, “A disciple should be careful to accept an uttama-adhikari as a spiritual master.” Then they boisterously claim that there are no uttama-adhikaris within ISKCON because “so many gurus have fallen down,” etc. They misleadingly quote descriptions of the uttama-adhikar that he is one who “constantly sees Krsna,” etc. and say that it is only such an uttama-adhikar who is “constantly seeing Krsna within his heart” that one should accept as a spiritual master. They say, “Since Srila Prabhupada (alone) is such an uttama-adhikari, everyone in ISKCON should accept Srila Prabhupada as their diksa guru and be saved.” However, if we closely examine the entire translation and purport of Srila Rupa Gosvami’s fifth verse of the Nectar of Instruction, it becomes apparent that the nature of the uttama-adhikari being referred to is different from what the pro-RtViks would want us to believe. We shall quote the translation and excerpts from the purport in italics.

Translation: One should mentally honor the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Krsna, one should offer humble obeisances to the devotee who has undergone spiritual initiation [diksa] and is engaged in worshiping the Deity, and one should associate with and faithfully serve that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others.

Taking into account the word meanings and translation, we discover that there are three distinguishing symptoms of the uttama-adhikari that are being referred to herein which are as follows:

1. Bhajana vijnam-“advanced in devotional service”
2. Ananyam-“without deviation” (“un-deviated” in the translation)
3. anya-ninda-adi-sunya-hrdam-“whose heart [is] completely devoid of blasphemy of others, etc.” (in the translation: “whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others”)

Such an uttama-adhikari, is referred to herein as a “pure devotee.”

Purport: In order to intelligently apply the six fold loving reciprocations mentioned in the previous verse, one must select proper persons with careful discrimination. The term “careful discrimination” reveals that the three categories of devotees can be distinguished from one another based on external and objective symptoms. It is not possible to exercise careful discrimination upon devotees merely on the basis of subjective opinions or unverifiable statements such as “he sees Krsna” or “he doesn’t see Krsna within his heart,” etc. So we can expect to come across in this purport clear and externally distinguishable descriptions of the three types of devotees. “Srila Rupa Gosvami therefore advises that we should meet with the Vaisnavas in an appropriate way, according to their particular status. In this verse he tells us how to deal with three types of devotees-the kanistha-adhikari, madhyama-adhikari and uttama-adhikari. The kanistha-adhikari, is a neophyte who has received the hari-name initiation from the spiritual master and is trying to chant the holy name of Krsna. One should respect such a person within his mind as a kanistha vaisnava. A madhyama-adhikari has received spiritual initiation from the spiritual master and has been fully engaged by him in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. The madhyama-adhikari should be considered to be situated midway in devotional service.”

A short description of the uttama-adhikari follows next:

*“The uttama-adhikari, or highest devotee, is one who is very advanced in devotional service.”*

The above is a rendering of Srila Rupa Gosvami’s term bhajana-vijnam-“advanced in devotional service.” “An uttama-adhikari is not interested in blaspheming others, his heart is completely clean, and he has attained the realized state of unalloyed Krsna consciousness.” The first half of the above is a rendering of Srila Rupa Gosvami’s terms anya-ninda-adi-sunya-hrdam “whose heart (is) completely devoid of blasphemy of others, etc.” The word “unalloyed” in the second half appears to indicate that the second half of the above is a rendering of the term ananyam “without deviation”





# 100 Deviations

(“undeviated” in the translation). “According to Srila Rupa Gosvami, the association and service of such a maha-bhagavata, or perfect Vaisnava, are most desirable.”

In the above, Srila Prabhupada calls such an uttama-adhikari a malva-bhagavata, or perfect Vaisnava.

*“One should not remain a kanistha-adhikari, one who is situated on the lowest platform of devotional service and is interested only in worshiping the Deity in the temple. Such a devotee is described in the Eleventh Canto of Sramad-Bhagavatam (11.2.47):*

*arcayam eve haraye pujaṁ yaḥ śraddhāyehate*

*no tad-bhakteṣu canyesu se bhaktāḥ prakṛtāḥ smṛtāḥ*

*“A person who is very faithfully engaged in the worship of the Deity in the temple, but who does not know how to behave toward devotees or people in general is called a prakṛta-bhakta, or kanistha-adhikari. “*

One therefore has to raise himself from the position of kanistha-adhikari to the platform of madhyama-adhikari. The madhyama-adhikari is described in Sr-imad-Bhagavatam (11.2.46) in this way:

*isvare tad-adhīṇeṣu balīṣeṣu dviṣatsu ca*

*prema-maitrī-kṛpopekṣa yaḥ karoti se madhyamāḥ*

*“The madhyama-adhikari is a devotee who worships the Su-preme Personality of Godhead as the highest object of love, makes friends with the Lord’s devotees, is merciful to the ignorant and avoids those who are envious by nature.” This is the way to cultivate devotional service properly; therefore, in this verse Srila Rupa Gosvami has advised us how to treat various devotees. We can see from practical experience that there are different types of Vaisnavas. The prakṛta-sahajiyas generally chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa maha-mantra, yet they are attached to women, money and intoxication. Although such persons may chant the holy name of the Lord, they are not yet properly purified. Such people should be respected within one’s mind, but their association should be avoided. Those who are innocent but simply carried away by bad association should be shown favor if they are eager to receive proper instructions from pure devotees, but those neophyte devotees who are actually initiated by the bona fide spiritual master and are seriously engaged in carrying out the orders of the spiritual master should be offered respectful obeisances.*

*In this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement a chance is given to everyone without discrimination of caste, creed or color. Everyone is invited to join this movement, sit with us, take prasada and hear about Kṛṣṇa. When we see that someone is actual-ly interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and wants to be initiated, we accept him as a disciple for the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. When a neophyte devotee is actually initiated and engaged in devotional service by the orders of the spiritual master, he should be accepted immediately as a bona fide Vaisnava, and obeisances should be offered unto him.”*

After describing externally distinguishable symptoms of kanistha- and madhyama-adhikaris, Srila Prabhupada proceeds to describe objectively the symptoms of an uttama-adhikari. so that we can exercise our careful discrimination:

*“Out of many such Vaisnavas, one may be found to be very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord and strictly following all the regulative principles, chanting the prescribed number of rounds on jape beads and always thinking of how to expand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.”*

The above is a further description of the uttama-adhikari. Here are the distinguishable symptoms (vilaksanas): (1) “very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord,” (2) “strictly following all the regulative principles,” (3) “chanting the prescribed number of rounds on jape beads” and (4) “always thinking of how to expand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.” All the four descriptions seem to elaborate on the term bhajana-vijñam “advanced in devotional service.” Thus we need not speculate on the meaning of the term “advanced in devotional service” as one who “sees Kṛṣṇa





# 100 deviations

within his heart etc.” but simply need to accept Srila Prabhupada’s above description of the uttama-adhikari.

*“Such a Vaisnava should be accepted as an uttama-adhikari, a highly advanced devotee, and his association should always be sought.”*

We must remember that the expression “such a Vaisnava” refers to the Vaisnava who is ( 1 ) “very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord,” (2) “strictly following all the regulative principles,” (3) “chanting the prescribed number of rounds on jape beads” and (4) “always thinking of how to expand the Krsna consciousness movement.”

Srila Prabhupada also uses the imperative “should” twice in the above sentence and thus makes it clear that any Vaisnava who exhibits the above four qualities “should be accepted as an uttama-adhikari, a highly advanced devotee, and his association should always be sought.”

“...The chanting of the holy names of Krsna is so sublime that if one chants the Hare Krsna maha-mantra offenselessly, carefully avoiding the ten offenses, he can certainly be gradually elevated to the point of understanding that there is no difference between the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself. One who has reached such an understanding should be very much respected by neophyte devotees.” “One who has reached such an understanding” is the uttama-adhikari. How does one become such an uttama-adhikari? By chanting the holy names offenselessly and by carefully avoiding the ten offenses, one is “gradually elevated” to the uttama-adhikari platform. From this, we can also understand that the uttamadhikara chants the holy names of Krsna without the ten offenses. It is an important point to note that chanting the holy names without offenses is an objective symptom which can be verified externally.

“...Unless one faithfully chants the Hare Krsna mantra, Krsna does not reveal Himself: sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah. (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.2.234) We cannot realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead by any artificial means. We must engage faithfully in the service of the Lord. Such service begins with the tongue (sevonmukhe hi jihvadau), which means that we should always chant the holy names of the Lord and accept krsna-prasada. We should not chant or accept anything else. When this process is faithfully followed, the Supreme Lord reveals Himself to the devotee. When a person realizes himself to be an eternal servitor of Krsna, he loses interest in everything but Krsna’s service.”

Now it may be possible for anyone to claim that he has realized himself to be an eternal servitor of Krsna, but Srila Prabhupada’s above statement helps us understand that such a devotee will lose interest in everything but Krsna’s service. Again, anyone can claim that he has no interest in anything but Krsna’s service. However, just to drive away this kind of speculation, Srila Prabhupada makes it clear what losing interest in everything but Krsna’s service actually means:

“Always thinking of Krsna, devising means by which to spread the holy name of Krsna, he understands that his only business is in spreading the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world.”

Such a person devises means by which to spread the holy name of Krsna and the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world. This is because he is “always thinking of Krsna.”

Thus Srila Prabhupada has provided us with a very clear and objective description of the uttama-adhikari. “Such a person is to be recognized as an uttama-adhikari, and his association should be immediately accepted according to the six processes (dadati pratigrhnati, etc.).”

Such a person who is devising means by which to spread the holy name of Krsna and the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world because he is always thinking of Krsna is to be recognized as an uttama-adhikari. By the causeless mercy of Srila Prabhupada and Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, there are many Vaisnavas within the Krsna consciousness movement (ISKCON) who fit the above description of an uttama-adhikari and they should be recognized as uttama-adhikaris. One should not illusion himself and others that such sincere and empowered preachers of the holy names of Krsna are not uttama-adhikaris. Such preachers’ association should be immediately accepted.

“Indeed, the advanced uttama-adhikari Vaisnava devotee should be accepted as a spiritual master.”



# 100 Deviations of Rtvikism

Such a constantly preaching Vaisnava should be accepted as a spiritual master.

“Everything one possesses should be offered to him, for it is enjoined that one should deliver whatever he has to the spiritual master.”

Everything one possess should be offered to him because he is constantly devising means by which to spread the holy name of Krsna and the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world.

“The brahmachari in particular is supposed to beg alms from others and offer them to the spiritual master. However, one should not imitate the behavior of an advanced devotee or maha-bhagavata without being self-realized, for by such imitation one will eventually become degraded. In this verse Srila Rupa Gosvami advises the devotee to be intelligent enough to distinguish between the kanistha-adhikari, madhyama-adhikari and uttama-adhikari. The devotee should also know his own position and should not try to imitate a devotee situated on a higher platform. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has given some practical hints to the effect that an uttamadhikara, Vaisnava can be recognized by his ability to convert many fallen souls to Vaisnavism.”

The above citation from Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura that an uttama-adhikari Vaisnava can be recognized by his ability to convert many fallen souls to Vaisnavism simply reconfirms Srila Prabhupada’s previous descriptions of the externally distinguishable symptoms of the uttama-adhikari:

1. “very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord,”
2. “strictly following all the regulative principles,”
3. “chanting the prescribed number of rounds on japa beads,”
4. “always thinking of how to expand the Krsna consciousness movement “
5. “devising means by which to spread the holy name of Krsna,” and
6. “spreading the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world.”

“One should not become a spiritual master unless he has attained the platform of uttama-adhikara. “ The external symptoms of one who has attained the platform of the uttama-adhikari, have been noted above. “A neophyte Vaisnava or a Vaisnava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance.”

The expression “can also accept disciples” reveals that a “kanistha-adhikari” (as described in this verse of Nectar of Instruction) or a madhyama-adhikari (also described in this verse) can also accept disciples. But the disciples cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life. Why? The answer is very clearly provided for by Srila Prabhupada himself using the pregnant expression “insufficient guidance.” Because such a spiritual masters’ guidance is insufficient. From the Sra, Caitanya-caritamṛta we learn that guidance is provided for by example and precept (acara and pracara). When we go through the descriptions of the symptoms of the kanistha and madhyama-adhikari.s as given in this verse and purport, it is obvious that their ability to guide their disciples by their example (acara) and precept (pracara) are quite limited and thus insufficient.

“Therefore a disciple should be careful to accept an uttama-adhikara, as a spiritual master.”

However, the uttama-adhikari or the Vaisnava who is ( 1 ) “very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord,” (2) “strictly following all the regulative principles,” (3) “chanting the prescribed number of rounds on jape beads,” (4) “always thinking of how to expand the Krsna consciousness movement “ (5) “devising means by which to spread the holy name of Krsna,” and (6) “spreading the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world” is certainly sufficiently able to guide his disciples by example (acara) and precept (pracara). Therefore, Srila Prabhupada states herein that one should accept such a preacher Vaisnava as a spiritual master. Any sincere and non-envious person who comes across the above mentioned six symptoms of the uttama-adhikari (collected from the purport) will be able to see that there are many such souls in Srila Prabhupada’s Krsna Consciousness movement (ISKCON). Such souls have to be recognized as “highly advanced devotees”, “advanced devotees”, “maha-bhagavatas” and “uttama-adhikaras” according to the clear definition given by Srila Prabhupada and Srila Rupa Gosvami. There may be various types or descriptions of uttama-



# 100 नवी वेवधलतलनइ

advikaris, but from an impartial study of this verse, its word meanings, its translation and its purport, we understand that the uttama-adhikara who has to be accepted as a spiritual master (according to this purport), is the sincere Vaisnava who constantly preaches the holy name throughout the world.

## 95 “A liberated soul can’t fall”

*“Not only does the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead act on the conditioned soul within this material world, but sometimes it also acts on the most advanced learned scholars, who factually know the constitutional position of this material world through realization. As soon as someone thinks, “I am this material body (aham mameti) and everything in relationship with this material body is mine,” he is in illusion (moha). This illusion caused by the material energy acts especially on the conditioned souls, but it sometimes also acts on liberated souls as well. A liberated soul is a person who has sufficient knowledge of this material world and is therefore unattached to the bodily conception of life. But because of association with the modes of material nature for a very long time, even liberated souls sometimes become captivated by the illusory energy due to inattentiveness in the transcendental position. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.18.4p)*

## 96 “A maha-bhagavata can’t fall”

Some pro-RtViks claim that a maha-bhagavata can never fall down and only such a maha-bhagavata should be accepted as a guru.

However, the doctrine that a maha-bhagavata cannot fall down is simply false and not based on the teachings of guru, sadhu and sastra. Only those who are unacquainted with the teachings of Srila Prabhupada can come to such conclusions. Here are some quotes from Srila Prabhupada which show that maha-bhagavatas can indeed fall down:

*“The mayavadi philosophers have presented their arguments in such attractive flowery language that hearing mayavada philosophy may sometimes change the mind of even a maha-bhagavata, or very advanced devotee.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Adi-lila 7.110p)*

*“A liberated soul is a person who has sufficient knowledge of this material world and is therefore unattached to the bodily conception of life. But because of association with the modes of material nature for a very long time, even liberated souls sometimes become captivated by the illusory energy due to inattentiveness in the transcendental position.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.18.4p)*

In the Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.7.1, in the Sanskrit word meanings, Bharata Maharaja is defined as a maha bhagavata both in the Sanskrit and in English

*sri suka uvaca  
bharatas tu maha-bhagavato yada bhagavatavani-tala-  
paripalanaya sancinitas tad-anusasana-parah pancajanim  
visvarupa-duhitaram upayeme*

*sri-sukah uvaca-Sukadeva Gosvami said; bharatah-Maharaja Bharata; to-but; maha-bhagavatah-a maha-bhagavata, most exalted devotee of the Lord;*

We must remember that in the Bhagavatam chapter that this verse appears, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami refers to Bharata Maharaja when he was a king in his first life as a maha-bhagavata. We learn that Bharata Maharaja fell down because of attachment to a deer, even though he was a maha-bhagavata. This incident is plain evidence that a even a malva-bhagavata can fall down from an advanced spiritual status.

## 97 “Gaps in the sampradaya prove RtVikism”

RtVik mayavadis proclaim that the alleged gaps in the parampara point that acaryas remain current after having disappeared from this world.

But Srila Prabhupada tells a different story:



*“Regarding parampara system: there is nothing to wonder for big gaps. Just like we belong to the Brahma Sampradaya, so we accept it from Krishna to Brahma, Brahma to Narada, Narada to Vyasadeva, Vyasadeva to Madhva, and between Vyasadeva and Madhva there is a big gap. But it is sometimes said that Vyasadeva is still living, and Madhva was fortunate enough to meet him directly. In a similar way, we find in the Bhagavad-gita that the Gita was taught to the sun-god, some millions of years ago, but Krishna has mentioned only three names in this parampara system—namely, Vivasvan, Manu, and Iksvaku; and so these gaps do not hamper from understanding the param-para system. We have to pick up the prominent acaryas, and follow from him. There are many branches also from the param-para system, and it is not possible to record all the branches and sub-branches in the disciplic succession. We have to pick up from the authority of the acharya in whatever sampradaya we belong to.” (Letter to Dayananda, 12” April, 1968)*

*“Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I have got my disciples, so in the future these many disciples may have many branches of disciplic succession. So in one line of disciples we may not see another name coming from a different line. But this does not mean that person whose name does not appear was not in the disciplic succession. Narada was the Spiritual Master of Vyasadeva, and Arjuna was Vyasadeva’s disciple, not as initiated disciple but there was some blood relation between them. So there is connection in this way, and it is not possible to list all such relationships in the short description given in Bhagavad-gita As It Is. Another point is that disciplic succession does not mean one has to be directly a disciple of a particular person. The conclusions which we have tried to ll. Inventing Doctrines 195 explain in our Bhagavad-gita As It Is is the same as those conclusions of Arjuna. Arjuna accepted Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and we also accept the same truth under the disciplic succession of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Things equal to the same thing are equal to one another. This is an axiomatic truth. So there is no difference of opinion of understanding Krishna between ourselves and Arjuna. Another example is that a tree has many branches, and you will find one leaf here and another leaf there. But if you take this leaf and the other leaf and you press them both, you will see that the taste is the same. The taste is the conclusion, and from the taste you can understand that both leaves are from the same tree.” (Letter to Kirtanananda, 25” January, 1969)*

So, in Srila Prabhupada’s words, “disciplic succession does not mean one has to be directly a disciple of a particular person”. The time-gaps between various acaryas, in the list given at the beginning of the Bhagavad gita, don’t mean that the previous acarya initiated the next one by a system of post samadhi proxy initiation.

## 98 “No need of a physical guru”

*“...God is called caitya-guru, the spiritual master within the heart. And the physical spiritual master is God’s mercy. If God sees that you are sincere, He will give you a spiritual master who can give you protection. He will help you from within and without, without in the physical form of spiritual master, and within as the spiritual master within the heart.” (Conversation, Rome, 23 May, 1974)*

*“...Krsna, He is within our heart. Hrdaya, isthah. Therefore, as soon as we become a little inclined towards Krsna, then from within our heart He gives us favorable instruction so that we can gradually make progress, gradually. Krsna is the first spiritual master, and when we become more interest ad, then we have to go to a physical spiritual master. That is enjoined in the next verse.*

*tad viddlii pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya  
upadeksyanti te jnanam jnaninas tattva-darsinah*

*...Nobody can become a medical practitioner simply by purchasing book from the market and reading at home. That is not possible. You have to admit yourself in a medical college and undergo*



# 100 गुरु वैचल्येन

*training and practical examination, so many things. Simply by purchasing book, it is not possible. Similarly, if you want to learn Bhagavad gita or any transcendental subject matter, here is the instruction by Lord Krsna Himself. Lord Krsna Himself, because He is the speaker of this Bhagavad gita, He says that tad viddlii pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya. You must go to a person where you can surrender yourself. That means you have to check, "Who is the real person who can give me instruction on Bhagavad-gita or any Vedic literature, or any scripture, right?" And not that, to search out a person as a, whimsically.*

*No. You have to search out a person very serious that, who is actually in the knowledge of the thing. Otheiwise why you shall surrender? No. There is no necessity of surrender. But here it is said clearly that 'You have to surrender to a person.' That means you have to find out such a person where you can voluntarily surrender. Without finding, your mission will not be fulfilled. ...Not only surrender, not blindly surrender. You must be able to inquire. Pariprasna. The next qualification is pariprasna. Pariprasna means 'inquiry. Without inquiry, you cannot make advance.'" (Srila Prabhupada's lecture on Bhagavad-gita 4.34, New York, 12 August, 1966)*

So, in Srila Prabhupada's words: "...we have to go to a physical spiritual master."

Self-evident.

"Simply by purchasing book, it is not possible. Similarly, if you want to learn Bhagavad gita or any transcendental subject matter:.. You must go to a person where you can surrender yourself..."

Srila Prabhupada remains as the foundational siksa guru for all ISKCON devotees. His books remain as the law-books of our Society, but to take diksa one has to approach a current link.

"Not only surrender, not blindly surrender. You must be able to inquire."

How do we inquire from a spiritual master after his disappearance?

## 99 "The 'fallible gurus' referred to in Krsna-bhajanamrta are kula-gurus"

The Krsna-bhajanamrta is a book by Srila Narahari Sarakara, a close associate of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and is referred to by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura. One of the topics of this important book is what to do when a guru falls down or has difficulties. The instructions given there form the basis of several ISKCON laws in regard to gurus' falldowns, etc.

Some creative pro-RtViks have concocted another doctrine, namely that the gurus who are being spoken of in the Krsna-bhajanamrta are only family priests or kola gurus and not "spiritual" masters. They thus imply that a kola guru can fall down but the others, who are spiritual masters, don't ever fall down. So the Bhajanmrta's points about guru-falldowns don't apply to ISKCON since we don't have kula gurus here. However, this is baseless because Narahari Sarakara never mentions that in the original text. Indeed, the text never mentions the term kula guru when it refers to guru-falldowns. The text in Bhajanamrta clearly makes it understood that the gurus who are referred to are practicing Vaisnava gurus.

Even if we were to accept their speculative argument, what different does it make if the guru is a kula guru or not, if he is a practicing Vaisnava? What is the compelling justification to say that these rules apply only to kula-gurus?

Thus this doctrine is wrong, and can be rejected as yet another imagination of the, RtVik-vadis.

## 100 "The ISKCON Laws based on Krsna-bhajanamrta are unacceptable"

The ISKCON Laws about suspension of gurus and related topics are based on Krsna-bhajanamrta, a book written by Srila Narahari Sarakara, a personal associate of Lord Caitanya (we sing about him at sandhya-arati "narahari-adi kori camera dhulaya"). In that book is very clear what to do in regard to fallen gurus, etc.





# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

Some die-hard pro-RtViks propound the following meaningless argument in a desperate move to rationalize their heresy: we should not refer to the Krsna-bhajanamrta in relation to gurus falling down, because Srila Prabhupada never told us to refer to that book.

The lack of logic should be clear. Srila Prabhupada taught us to refer to the books of the previous acaryas and the work of Srila Narahari obviously falls in that category. Here is one of many quotations referring to the books of the previous acaryas and Vedic writings:

*“Pure devotees have prepared many books of knowledge on the basis of authorized scriptures. Srila Rupa Gosvami and his assistants, under the instructions of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, have all written various literatures for the guidance of prospective devotees, and anyone who is very serious about raising himself to the standard of a pure devotee of the Lord must take advantage of those literatures.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.7.39p)*

This book, written by a Gaudiya Vaisnava Acarya, explicidly discusses the issue of what to do about a guru (diksa and siksa) having difficulties. Why the RtVik-vadis suggest we reject it? Is there any reason except that it doesn't support their doctrines? The Krsna-bhajanamrta was so important that Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura published it. On what basis one can reject its authority?

## 101 “We are only changing details, not principles”

RtVikists sustain: “Post-samadhi RtVik initiation system is only changing the details of conducting the initiation ceremony and not the principle of initiation itself.”

When we argue that the post-samadhi RtVik system does not follow guru-sadhu-sastra precedents, some pro-RtViks argue back that the post-samadhi RtVik system does indeed follow guru-sadhu-sastra.

Here is how their doctrine goes:

“Diksa is defined thus by Srila Prabhupada: ‘Diksa is the process by which one can awaken his transcendental knowledge and vanquish all reactions caused by sinful activity. A person expert in the study of the revealed scriptures knows this process as diksa.’ (Bhakti-sandarbha 283 quoted in Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila 15.108p) Diksa has two functional aspects to it: transmission of transcendental knowledge and vanquishment of sinful reactions. In the post-samadhi ;RtVik system, both these functions are applicable. One can awaken transcendental knowledge by studying Srila Prabhupada’s books and by engagement of devotional service, one’s sinful reactions can be vanquished. The details regarding initiation are being changed in the post-samadhi RtVik system; the principles regarding initiation are not.”

The above is what the pro-RtViks claim. However, the requirement that we must take initiation and guidance from a living spiritual master is a principle and not a detail. This can be gathered by studying the first five principles given to us by Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Prabhupada in the Nectar of Devotion, Chapter 6:

*“For example, a basic principle is that one has to accept a spiritual master. Exactly how one follows the instructions of his spiritual master is considered a detail. For example, if one is following the instruction of his spiritual master and that instruction is different from the instructions of another spiritual master, this is called detailed information. But the basic principle of acceptance of a spiritual master is good everywhere, although the details may be different. Srila Rupa Gosvami does not wish to enter into details here, but wants to place before us only the principles.” (Nectar of Devotion) Indeed, the first five basic principles of devotional service involve acceptance of a personal, living spiritual master:*

*“He mentions the basic principles as follows: (1) accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master, (2) becoming initiated by the spiritual master and learning how to discharge devotional service from him, (3) obeying the orders of the spiritual master with faith and devotion, (4) following in the footsteps of great acaryas (teachers) under the direction of the spiritual master, (5) inquiring from the spiritual master how to advance in Krsna*



# 100 deviations

consciousness...” (ibid.) These five basic principles are also found in *Caitanya-caritamṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 22.115:

“On the path of regulative devotional service, one must observe the following items: (1) one must accept a bona fide spiritual master. (2) Accept initiation from him. (3) Serve him. (4) Receive instructions from the spiritual master and make inquiries in order to learn devotional service. (5) Follow in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas and follow the directions given by the spiritual master.”

Now let us examine what ,RtViks would do when they come across these five basic principles of devotional service. (We can consider both the **Nectar of Devotion** version and **Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta** version of the five principles.)

## Principle 1:

**P1a: Accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master (Nectar of Devotion)**

**P1b: One must accept a bona fide spiritual master. (Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta)**

Pro-RtViks may try to get away by claiming that this means that we accept Srīla Prabhupada as our spiritual master, as our shelter, but the question always remains, how can we be sure Prabhupada has actually accepted us if he is not here personally to do so?

## Principle 2:

**P2a: Becoming initiated by the spiritual master and learning how to discharge devotional service from him (Nectar of Devotion)**

**P2b: Accept initiation from him. (Sri, Caitanya-caritamṛta)**

Let us see how Srīla Prabhupada has worded principle 2. He says that one should become initiated by the spiritual master and learn to discharge devotional service from him. The expression “learn... from him” reveals that the “him” who is referred to here is a living person with whom we can interactively communicate.

The term “him” in the Nectar of Devotion version reveals that the spiritual master from whom one accepts initiation is the same spiritual master from whom one must learn how to discharge devotional service. The pro-RtViks claim that the dikṣa guru is Srīla Prabhupada. However, according to this idea; how are they going to learn and communicate with Srīla Prabhupada interactively

## Principle 3:

**P3a: Obeying the orders of the spiritual master with faith and devotion (Nectar of Devotion)**

**P3b:.. Serve him. (Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta)**

Srīla Prabhupada then says in principle 3 that one should obey the orders of the spiritual master with faith and devotion. It is not that the dikṣa guru is merely a RtVik who simply performs a ceremony and leaves it at that, someone whose orders the initiated disciple is not bound to obey. No. From principle 3, we learn that we should obey the orders of the spiritual master with faith and devotion. The word “him” in the Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta version makes it clear that one should serve and obey the orders of that very spiritual master from whom one has received initiation with faith and devotion.

## Principle 4:

**P4a: Following in the footsteps of great ācāryas (teachers) under the direction of the spiritual master (Nectar of Devotion)**

**P4b: Follow in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas and follow the directions given by the spiritual master. (Sri, Caitanya-caritamṛta)** [This is presented by Srīla Prabhupada as point 5 in the Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta]

Here Srīla Prabhupada uses the expression “under the direction of the spiritual master” in the Nectar of Devotion version. This is another proof that the spiritual master, who is being referred to here, is a living spiritual master from whom we can receive direct guidance and direction. (All the previous ācāryas accepted initiation from a living spiritual master, so we should also do so, in order to “follow in the Footsteps of the previous ācāryas “... )

## Principle 5:



# 100 Rtvik Deviations

P5a: 5. Inquiring from the spiritual master how to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness (Nectar of Devotion)

P5b: 4. Receive instructions from the spiritual master and make inquiries in order to learn devotional service. (Sri, Caitanya-caritamṛta) [This is presented by Srila Prabhupada as point 4 in the Sra, Caitanya-caritamṛta]

In wording this principle, Srila Prabhupada has used the expressions “inquiring” and “make inquiries” making it clear that we should inquire from the spiritual master. How is it possible at present (after the physical departure of His Divine Grace) to inquire from His Divine Grace and elicit answers? Such inquiries obviously necessitate the presence of a living spiritual master.

It is clear that acceptance of and taking initiation and instructions from a living physical spiritual master, is a basic principle and not a detail that can be passed off lightly by the pro-RtViks. It is a basic principle of devotional service; one cannot avoid taking initiation from a living, physical spiritual master.

Since the post samadlvi ,RtVik doctrine goes against the basic principles of devotional service as taught by Lord Caitanya, Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Prabhupada, it cannot be accepted by followers of Srila Prabhupada and Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

## 102 “A Guru under the GBC cannot be “suksad-dharitva” to his disciples”

The GBC Body was set up by Srila Prabhupada to be the ultimate authority of ISKCON. The gurus are also under the GBC Body, but that does not minimize their position because the GBC-body’s decisions represents Srila Prabhupada’s decisions for his ISKCON and his disciples. The gurus are servants of Srila Prabhupada and therefore also the servants of his representative managerial body, the GBC.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, in his book Godruma-kalpa-tavi, wrote that in the name-hatta organization he established, the ruling body will be a group of senior Vaisnavas. The decisions of this group, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura says, is to be considered nondifferent from the decision of Lord Nityananda Prabhu Himself, who is the Founder of the nama-hatta, the market of the holy name.

A guru being subordinate to an assembly of senior Vaisnavas is not a modern invention. Before Srila Ramanuja’s time, the sole and ultimate authority for the Sri Vaisnava community was Srila Yamunacarya. Yamunacarya wanted to initiate Ramanuja, who was studying under Yadavaprakasa, a mayavadi. Ramanuja left the mayavadi class just around the time Yamunacarya called him. Ramanuja was in ecstasy and ran to see him. When he reached Sri Rangam to meet Yamunacarya, he found that he had departed to Vaikuntha. Yamunacarya had a group of senior disciples who were empowered by him to take decisions. They met and decided that Ramanuja should be properly trained and later take up the leadership of the entire Sri Vaisnava community. They decided that Mahapurna, a disciple of Yamunacarya, should help Ramanuja. Mahapurna agreed immediately and set out to Kancipuram where Ramanuja was staying. So here is an actual instance of a Vaisnava-sabha, an assembly of senior Vaisnavas, with executive power.

Later on, Ramanuja took sanmyasa and became a leader with many disciples. In their parampara, disciples were allowed to take disciples during the physical presence of the guru. So Ramanuja had disciples even in the presence of his diksa guru Srila Mahapurna. One day the latter told him to go to one Gosthipurna and learn the meaning of one vaisnava-mantra. Ramanuja went to Gosthipurna but Gosthipurna considered Ramanuja to be unqualified and told him to come back later. This happened seventeen times. Finally Ramanuja stopped eating and was in great distress. Ramanuja’s disciples informed Ramanuja’s diksa guru Srila Mahapurna who sent word to his Godbrother Gosthipurna requesting him to kindly give mercy to Ramanuja, which he then did.

One point of observation was that Ramanuja’s disciples didn’t start worrying about their guru being considered unqualified by a higher authority and therefore relativized, etc. They had respect and allegiance to Ramanuja and they were simply surrendered to him. Of course, Ramanuja’s Godbrothers or Godcousins might not have had that same kind of relationship with him. In the same



way, current ISKCON guru; are working under the GBC, which may give various instructions to the gurus, but in the disciples' eyes the guru is always the representative of the Supreme Lord. Had it been the twentieth century, disciples might be worrying about their guru not being a maha-bhagavata, who can never ever make any mistakes, what to speak of being refused a lecture on a vaisnava-mantra because he is considered unqualified. But since they were in a Vedic society, they didn't display such misgivings. They understood that the guru is saksad dharitva in the sense that he is transmitting transcendental knowledge intact without adulteration both by example and precept, but also that the guru is a servant of higher spiritual authorities and that this does not minimize the position of the guru at all. It simply proves that the guru is a servant of the Vaisnavas, especially senior Vaisnavas, who have been given spiritual responsibilities by the Founder.

In many instances it is seen that a Vaisnava-sabha make decisions that are followed by the gurus. There is no dichotomy between a guru being a servant of an assembly of senior Vaisnavas (Vaisnava-sabha) and him being saksad-dharitva to his disciples. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has written that he is doing this or that simply to fulfill the orders of the superiors. He always remained subordinate to the ruling body of the nameless organization that he started. It doesn't minimize Bhaktivinoda Thakura, rather it shows how glorious he was.

*"So we have to go to a person who is as good as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. As good, how one can become Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu? He is God. How another man can become as good as Caitanya Mahaprabhu? Then he is also God? No. He doesn't require to be God, and neither he can ever become God. That is false. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's equal person means one who speaks the exactly what Caitanya Mahaprabhu speaks. That makes him equal. He doesn't manufacture. If you simply repeat what Krsna says or Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, then you become equal to me. Equal to me? That is guru. Guru means who is equal. Saksad dharitvena samas-ta-sastrair uktas tatha bhavyata eve sadbhil, v. Why guru is accepted as God Himself? Does it mean Mayavada philosophy? No. This is not Mayavada. Because he is most confidential servant of God- kintu prabhor yah priya eve tasya Therefore he's as good as God. He is very, very dear to God. Why? Because he does not speak anything nonsense what his master does not speak, that's all. That is the qualification."*

## 103 "We are the traditionalists"

One of the RtVik-vadis' latest twists is to present themselves as the real traditionalists. They say: "We are the no-change group; we are the ones who follow ISKCON tradition." They say that Srila Prabhupada was the diksa guru in ISKCON (before his disappearance) and that we should stick to this, without change (even after his disappearance). Of course, these might be catchy slogans "No change!" or "We are following tradition!" but when analyzed, these statements are nonsensical. Why not say: "Lord Brahma is the original diksa guru in our sampradaya, we should not change anything and let him remain the initiating guru for everyone!"

(This would at least have the advantage that Brahma is still physically present although hard to approach). Tradition is something different from ever-changing concoctions. Srila Prabhupada explains:

*"One who is now the disciple is the next spiritual master." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.9.43p)*

This is tradition.

## 11. Consequences of RtVikism

### 104 RtVikism is a deadly weapon of Kali

Kali spreads its influence by creating dissension among devotees. The meaning of Kali is "quarrel".

Srila Prabhupada wanted that we expressed our love for him through unity and cooperation. He also



# 100 Deviations

said that this movement cannot be stopped by any external agency, but it can be broken from within. Irresponsibly spreading RtVikism instead of Srila Prabhupada's bona-fide teaching creates confusion and dissension among Vaisnavas.

## 105 Guru as God-brother

A disciple of an ISKCON guru might accept RtVikism and start considering himself a God-brother of his own spiritual master. Accepting such absurd proposition is one of the gravest forms of the offense called maryada-vyatikrama.

*"Although one may be well versed in the transcendental science, one should be careful about the offense of maryada-vyatikrama, or impertinently surpassing a greater personality. According to scriptural injunction one should be very careful of transgressing the law of maryada-sryatikrama because by so doing one loses his duration of life, his opulence, fame and piety and the blessings of all the world.*

*...The Lord never tolerates the impertinence of maryada-vyatikrama." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.4.26p) "Our Krishna Consciousness movement is based on complete fellow feeling and love, but there is a word maryada which means respect which should always be offered to the Spiritual Master and elderly members." (Srila Prabhupada's letter, 17 April, 1970)*

So considering oneself as the Godbrother of one's diksa guru is certainly a great and self-destructive offense.

## 106 It turns Srila Prabhupada into a zonal-acarya

RtVikists stress that Srila Prabhupada was the only diksa guru in ISKCON and that he should remain so. Actually, that Srila Prabhupada was the only guru was something circumstantial, not based on some unchangeable principle or injunction. Srila Prabhupada repeatedly invited his Godbrothers to preach in the West. Are we to think that, once in the West, Srila Prabhupada would not allow them to be regular diksa gurus and initiate? Are we supposed to think that they would only act as proxies on behalf of their Godbrother, Srila Prabhupada? RtVikism implies that Srila Prabhupada was and should remain the zonal-acarya of the planet Earth, but where did Srila Prabhupada ever say that he wanted to be the only guru in ISKCON during his presence? What to speak of remaining the only guru after his departure.

## 107 It fosters the idea that one can take diksa from any previous acarya

This thought itself is an offense. Srila Prabhupada has repeatedly warned us against jumping over present acaryas. Jayagopala, a kayastha from the village Kandra in Bengal was ostracized from the Vaisnava society by Sri Virabhadra Gosvami (an incarnation of Lord Visnu), when he tried to jump over his spiritual master.

Recently a RtVik-mayaadi was preaching to a lady congregational devotee suggesting that she take initiation from Srila Prabhupada, to which she replied, "If I can take initiation from Srila Prabhupada directly, then being a grhastha, I would rather feel more inspired to take initiation from Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura."

Once the principle of taking diksa from a departed acarya is accepted, the sky is the limit. It would be surprising to start seeing people claiming to be initiated by Srila Rupa Gosvami or Srila Isvara Puri.

## 108 Encourages people to take diksa outside ISKCON

Devotees in general desire a personal guidance in their lives from a living guru. If RtVikism is promulgated, many might feel prompted to go outside of ISKCON to get a living, physical guru with whom to establish a normal guru-disciple relation. Will such spiritual guides give them the pure message and standards presented by Srila Prabhupada?

## 109 Minimizing Srila Prabhupada's potency

It is said that the potency of a Vaisnava is measured by his ability to convert the fallen souls into Vaisnavas. Srila Prabhupada said that his mystic potency was that he converted so many low-born





# 100 Rtvik deviations

Westerners into Vaisnavas. It is seen that the so-called incarnations, who gather many followers by displaying some mystic power, can't even stop their followers from smoking. According to some RtVik-mayawadis, Srila Prabhupada could not even create one bona fide spiritual master. By such propaganda ("Prabhupada was so great but all his disciples are unqualified") they are destroying the devotees' faith in Srila Prabhupada's preaching efficacy as well.

## 110 Wasting time

RtVikists don't seem to realize that all their points have long since been refuted, and so they keep cooking up new shades of their theories. This wastes a lot of time. How many hundreds of ISKCON-hours have been wasted in refuting their stacks of useless, speculative papers? Of course, very few devotees actually read them, being too busy serving Krsna, but it is still a disturbance.

## 111 Turning people away from Krsna Consciousness

Many people's faith has been affected due to RtVik-vadis' slanderous, anti-ISKCON propaganda.

Someone got so affected that he threw away his neckbeads, stopped chanting and left devotional service altogether. Also, by slandering ISKCON in public-in particular on the internet—they are turning people away from the shelter of Srila Prabhupada's lotus feet.

## 112 Providing ammunition to the anti-cult movement

If anyone has been helped by the RtVikists' preaching, it is the anti cult people. By creating and propagating their brand of apa-sanpradayic thought, RtVikists encourage the enemies of Vaisnavism to see the Hare Krsna movement as a new cult, a dangerous sect with no connection with bona-fide Vedic teachings.

## 113 Offending Vaisnavas

RtVik-vadis claim that because so many gurus have fallen the remaining gurus are also fallen, or if they are not already fallen, it is just a matter of time before they will. This is offensive to ISKCON gurus in good standing. It is also a very grave offense to try to destroy the guru-bhakti of disciples and aspiring disciples.

In Sri Caitanya-caritamrta (Madltya-lila 15.261) Srila Prabhupada cites a conversation between Markandeya and Bhagiratha from the Skanda Purana:

*"My dear King, if one derides an exalted devotee, he loses the results of his pious activities, his opulence, his reputation and his sons. Vaisnavas are all great souls. Whoever blasphemes them falls down to the hell known as Mahaurava. He is also accompanied by his forefathers. Whoever kills or blasphemes a Vaisnava and whoever is envious of a Vaisnava or angry with him, or whoever does not offer him obeisances or feel joy upon seeing a Vaisnava, certainly falls into a hellish condition."* "The Hari-bhakti-vilasa (10.314) also gives the following quo-tation from Dvaraka-mahatmya:

*kara-patrais ca phalyante sutivair yams-sasanaih  
nindam kurvanti ye papa vaisnavanam mahatmanam*

In a conversation between Prahlada Maharaja and Bali Mahara-ja, it is said, "Those sinful people who blaspheme Vaisnavas, who are all great souls, are subjected very severely to the punishment offered by Yamaraja."

## 114 It promotes irresponsibility

It is as if some, RtVik-vadis reckon that the best way to avoid responsibility is to become a RtVik guru and not a regular one. This is not what Srila Prabhupada taught us. Srila Prabhupada often quoted the Bhagavatam verse that says that one should not become guru unless he is able to deliver his dependents:

*"One who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master; a father, a husband, a mother or a worshipable demi-god."* (Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.5.18)



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

RtVikists defy Srila Prabhupada's request to all his disciples to become qualified and make disciples all over the world. RtVikists avoid taking responsibility and instead they want to burden Srila Prabhupada with all this obligation.

## 115 It renders discipleship meaningless

Lord Krsna in the Bhagavad gita instructs that one should approach a spiritual master in submission, inquire from him, and serve him. RtVikism empties that relation of meaning and substance.

*"Disciple means one who is regulated by higher authority. He is disciple. The higher authority is called the spiritual master; and the person who voluntarily submits to him for being regulated, he is called disciple." (Srila Prabhupada's lecture, 25 February, 1975)*

*"A disciple means who voluntarily agrees to be disciplined by the spiritual master. When one becomes disciple, he cannot disobey the order of the spiritual master. Sisya. Sisya, this word, comes from the root sas-dhatu, means 'I accept your ruling.' (Srila Prabhupada's lecture, 11 February, 1975) 'A Spiritual Master has the right to chastise his disciple any way He likes. A sisya or a disciple means one who accepts the disciplinary action given by the Spiritual Master. Even although sometimes a Spiritual Master chastises his disciple as a fool or rascal in fatherly affection, it does not mean necessarily that the disciple is a fool or a rascal. You will find even in the statement of Lord Caitanya, He presents Himself as a fool designated by His Spiritual Master, but that does not mean that He was a fool. A sincere disciple feels it pleasurable when his Spiritual Master chastises him with calling him such names as fool and rascal. My Spiritual Master sometimes called me in that way and I remember that day always and feel transcendental pleasure.'" (Srila Prabhupada's letter, 27<sup>th</sup> January, 1970)*

## 116 It breaches the law of disciplic succession

*"Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bonafide Guru, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual Master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession." (Srila Prabhupada's letter, 2 December, 1975)*

## Miscellaneous Speculations and General Deviations (The Goebbels approach)

### 117 RtVikism is generated and propagated on the basis of the four defects of the conditioned soul

*"In the modern age there is a tendency to do research by mental speculation and concoction. But the man who speculates forgets that he himself is subject to the four defects of nature: he is sure to commit mistakes, his senses are imperfect, he is sure to fall into illusion, and he is cheating. Unless one has perfect knowledge from disciplic succession, he simply puts forth some theories of his own creation; therefore he is cheating people." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.24.17p) "If you do not receive instruction of Krsna from the sampradaya, then viphala-matah, then whatever you have learned, it is useless. It is useless." (Srila Prabhupada's lecture, 25 March, 1974)*

### 118 Misuse of the expression "current link"

Srila Prabhupada's once used the expression "current link" in a Srimad-Bhagavatam purport:

*"As already stated, Brahma is the original spiritual master for the universe, and since he was initiated by the Lord Himself, the message of Srimad Bhagavatam is coming down by disciplic-succession, and in order to receive the real message of Srzmad-Bhagavatam one should approach the current link, or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession. After being initiated by the proper spiritual master in that chain of succession, one should engage himself in*



*the discharge of tapasya in the execution of devotional service.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.9.7p) Contrary to Srila Prabhupada’s teachings on parampara, RtVikists try to convince us that Srila Prabhupada remains the current link in the chain of disciplic succession. But Srila Prabhupada declared that his disciples shall become the next current link:*

*“So we have got this message from Krsna, from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, from the six Gosvamis, later on, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Bhaktisiddhanta Thakura. And we are trying our bit also to distribute this knowledge. Now, tenth, eleventh twelfth. My Guru Maharaja is tenth from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, I am eleventh, you are the twelfth.” (Los Angeles, arrival lecture, 18 May, 1972)*

## 119 Misuse of the expression “embraced by Krsna”

The pro-RtViks show us excerpts from the following purport in an attempt to make us believe that only an uttama-adhvikari maha-bhagavata totally beyond material desires can be a guru:

*“In Dvaparayoga, devotees of Lord Visnu and Krsna rendered devotional service according to the principles of picnaratika. In this age of Kali, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshiped simply by the chanting of His holy names. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura then comments: ‘Without being empowered by the direct potency of Lord Krsna to fulfill His desire and without being specifically favored by the Lord, no human being can become the spiritual master of the whole world. He certainly cannot succeed by mental concoction, which is not meant for devotees or religious people. Only an empowered personality can distribute the holy name of the Lord and enjoin all fallen souls to worship Krsna. By distributing the holy name of the Lord, he cleanses the hearts of the most fallen people; therefore he extinguishes the blazing fire of the material world. Not only that, he broadcasts the shining brightness of Krsna’s effulgence throughout the world. Such an acarya; or spiritual master, should be considered nondifferent from Krsna that is, he should be considered the incarnation of Lord Krsna’s potency. Such a personality is krsna, alingita-vigraha-that is, he is always embraced by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna. Such a person is above the considerations of the varnasrama institution. He is the guru or spiritual master for the entire world, a devotee on the topmost platform, the maha-bhagavata stage, and a paramahansa-thakura, a spiritual form only fit to be addressed as paramahansa or thakura.’*

*Nonetheless, there are many people who are just like owls but never open their eyes to see the sunshine. These owlish personalities are inferior to the Mayavadi sannyasis who cannot see the brilliance of Krsna’s favor. They are prepared to criticize the person engaged in distributing the holy name all over the world and following in the footsteps of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who wanted Krsna consciousness preached in every town and city.” (Caitanya-caritamṛta, Madhyalila 25.9p)*

Instead of understanding the purport in its entirety the pro-RtViks select only this part:

*“Such a personality is krsnalingita-vigraha-that is, he is always embraced by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna. Such a person is above the considerations of the varn,uzsrama institution. He is the guru or spiritual master for the entire world, a devotee on the topmost platform, the maha-bhagavata stage, and a paramahansa-thakura, a spiritual form only fit to be addressed as paramahansa or thakura.” And then they claim, “See, this proves that only a person who is on the topmost platform, the maha-bhagavata stage, a para-mahansa-thakura, who is always embraced by Krsna, only such a person can be a guru. No one else can be a guru. “In response to that, we can simply examine the purport more closely to see what the above statement of Prabhupada means. Who is this personality who is always embraced by Krsna. What does he do? See the whole purport above. You will find the following about this personality:*

1. He is engaged in distributing the holy name of the Lord.
2. Distributing the holy names, he cleanses the hearts of the most fallen people.
3. Therefore he extinguishes the blazing fire of the material world.
4. Not only that, he broadcasts the shining brightness of Krsna’s effulgence throughout the world.



Then Prabhupada says about a person who preaches the holy name throughout the world, “Such an acarya, or spiritual master, should be considered nondifferent from Krsna -that is, he should be considered the incarnation of Lord Krsna’s potency.” So such a preacher of the holy name should be considered to be an acarya and nondifferent from Krsna. “He should be considered the incarnation of Lord Krsna’s potency”. Please note the usage of the term “should be considered”. Then Prabhupada continues: “Such a personality is krsnalingi-ta-vigraha-that is, he is always embraced by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna... he is the guru or spiritual master for the entire world, a devotee on the topmost platform, the maha-bhagavata stage, and a paramahansa-thakura...’ So Prabhupada’s point is that a such a preacher of the holy name is always embraced by... Krsna and that such a preacher of the holy name is guru for the whole world. It does not state anywhere in this purport that a person who is embraced by Krsna in his svarupa has to be accepted as a guru. The real point is that the RtVik-vadis don’t want any guru at all. They say they only want a maha-bhagavata but how will they recognize such a personality? And Srila Prabhupada is not here with us anymore to tell them what to do and what not to do. In this way they can do what they like without feeling guilty about it, which is what they really want. The purport in consideration simply states that a personality who is preaching the holy name and delivering the conditioned souls by the potency of Lord Krsna’s name should be considered the incarnation of Lord Krsna’s potency. Now someone may think, “Yes, but the purport also says that such a personality is empowered to preach. So only an empowered maha-bhagavata preacher can be accepted as a guru and not just any unempowered non-maha-bhagavata Vaisnavas. Yes, it is true that only one who is empowered by Krsna can do any of the things that Prabhupada had described in the purport such as:

1. Distributing the holy name of the Lord.
2. Cleansing the hearts of the most fallen people.
3. Extinguishing the blazing fire of the material world.
4. Broadcasting the shining brightness of Krsna’s effulgence throughout the world.

Srila Prabhupada has explained in many places that anyone who is a disciple and follows strictly in the footsteps of his guru becomes empowered to carry out the above functions. Purity is the force.

## 120 Putting forward a variety of contradictory doctrines

RtVik speculations come in different flavors (all disgusting). In “Where the RtVik People are Wrong”, H.H. Jayadvaita Swami outlines three forms:

What is the post-samadhi RtVik guru doctrine?

We now come to the question to be decided: Did Srila Prabhupada intend that, even after his physical departure, his disciples would continue to serve as RtVik gurus by initiating devotees who would be not their disciples but his? On November 14, 1977, Srila Prabhupada ended his manifest physical pastimes and, as the traditional language puts it, “entered samadhi. “The assertion that his disciples should continue to serve as RtViks, then, is what we may call the “post-samadhi RtVik guru doctrine.”

I trust you will accept that my statement of the question has been accurate and fair and my language neutral. Now, moving on, I should next make clear that the post-samadhi RtVik guru doctrine comes in two forms, which we may call “hard” and “soft.”

The “hard” doctrine says this: Srila Prabhupada is the only initiating spiritual master for all ISKCON devotees, and he shall continue to be so forever. Acting as RtViks on his behalf, certain disciples may initiate new devotees, who then become not their disciples but his. ISKCON shall follow this system, and only this system, forever.

Differing on certain points is the “soft” doctrine: Srila Prabhupada is the only initiating spiritual master for all ISKCON devotees. Acting as RtViks on his behalf, certain disciples may initiate new devotees, who then become not their disciples but his. This system shall continue until the appearance within ISKCON of pure devotees fit to initiate disciples of their own. The RtVik system will then come to an end. It should be instantly clear that these two doctrines are incompatible and mutually





# 100 deviations

exclusive. If the hard doctrine is right, the soft doctrine is wrong, and vice versa. Just as a man cannot be both living and dead, or a woman both pregnant and sterile, we cannot have a RtVik system that is both permanent and temporary. It's either one or the other not both. For the sake of thoroughness, we may also note that some people have put forward a hybrid "soft/hard" doctrine, in which pure devotees initiate their own disciples and yet the RtVik system continues side by side. This doctrine, of course, is incompatible with the other two. If it is right, both of the others must be wrong, and if either of the others is right, this one must be wrong.

## 121 Implying that Srila Prabhupada wasn't able to judge

All the devotees who were in touch with Srila Prabhupada declared that Srila Prabhupada never mentioned a posthumous RtVik doctrine. In face of such overwhelming evidence, RtVik theorists take the only possible alternative to attempt to keep to their theory, i.e. they try to discredit the evidence of all the seniormost devotees in the movement, those whom Prabhupada had personally chosen. However, to write off all of Prabhupada's hand-picked men as being ill-motivated is also an offense to Srila Prabhupada himself, implying that he wasn't able to judge the sincerity and motives of his disciples.

## 122 Claiming historical precedent for RtVik initiations (sauce for the goose)

This is the logical fallacy of referring to an example that is applicable in one instance, but not in another. "Regarding parampara system; there is nothing to wonder for big gaps.....we find in the Bhagavad-gita that the Gita was taught to the sun-god, some millions of years ago, but Krishna has mentioned only three names in this parampara system namely, Vivasvan, Manu, and Ikshvaku; and so these gaps do not hamper from understanding the parampara system. We have to pick up from the prominent acaryas, and follow from him... We have to pick up from authority of the a;arya in whatever sampradaya we belong to." (Srila Prabhupada Letter Dayananda, 68-4-12)

RtVik papers have tried to establish that these demigods remained as the "current link" for millions of years, but the difference is that they remained physically present. How can we imitate Vivasvan and Manu? They are demigods from higher realms of existence. Clearly their examples are not applicable in our case. Besides, even they didn't take RtVik initiation.

The Sun-god actually appeared before Ikshvaku and instructed him, and he in turn instructed Manu. Even these higher living entities don't rely on remote initiation as it is fancied by RtVik-vadis. Another example given is that of Madhvacharya taking initiation from Vyasadeva. However, this also conforms to the standard Vedic understanding. Madhva traveled to the Himalayas and met Vyasadeva personally and took initiation from him face to face.

## 123 Double standards

RtVikists imagine that Srila Prabhupada should have expressed his desire that after his disappearance his disciples become diksa gurus, using a sentence containing the word "order." But when it comes to the crazy idea that Srila Prabhupada wanted to remain as diksa guru after his departure, RtVikists accept a doctrine Srila Prabhupada never even mentioned as the dh,arma of ISKCON for the next 10,000 years. A clear case of double standard.

## 124 Misquoting

In their desperate efforts to find support for their doctrines, RtVikists sometimes recur to misquoting devotees' statements as if they were agreeing with their ideas. One example: H.H. Jayadvaita Maharaja, a staunch opponent of the ,RtVik-heresy, was quoted in a RtVik publication: "Commenting on the July 9 order, Jayadvaita Swami recently wrote:

'Its authority is beyond question [...] Clearly, this letter establishes a RtVik guru system.' (Jayadvaita Swami 'Where the RtVik People are Wrong' 1996)

What the author "forgot" to mention is the remaining part of the sentence: "Clearly, this letter establishes a RtVik guru system. But one may ask where it says that such a system should continue even after Srila Prabhupada's departure." So, when the mangled citation is presented in its pristine form,





it only reveals doubts on the validity of RtVikism. Another quotation from His Holiness reveals his true feelings about RtVikism:

“...your paper and your theory aren’t worth two turds in hell...”  
(from Where the RtVik People Are Wrong Again)

## 125 Special pleading

In a form of this logical fallacy one pushes an argument he himself would not present in similar situations. For instance, demanding an unnecessary documentation of individual appointment, RtVikvadis ask: “Where did Srila Prabhupada order any of his disciples to become diksa guru?” This is a classic example of special pleading, as they would not dare to ask:

“Where did Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura order Srila Prabhupada to become diksa guru?” or “Where did Gaura-kisora dasa Babaji Maharaja order Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura to initiate disciples?” or “Where Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu specifically ordered Srila Rupa Gosvami to begin initiating?”

## 126 Following Ekalavya’s approach

The story of Ekalavya occurs in the Mahabharata. Ekalavya was the son of a Nisada (a low-class tribe) king and wanted to become a disciple of Drona to learn the art of Dhanur-veda. But Drona refused to teach him. Then Ekalavya, without securing the permission of Drona, made an earthen and mystical image of Drona and started worshipping it. Mahabharata mentions that Ekalavya obtained power from the image so much so that Ekalavya did become a very proficient archer.

One day Arjuna found out about Ekalavya’s mode of worship and skill and informed Drona about Ekalavya and hinted to Drona that Ekalavya should not be allowed to remain in such situation. Dronacarya then went to Ekalavya and asked for his right thumb as guru-daksina. Ekalavya promptly cut off his right thumb and gave it to Dronacarya. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura has commented on this incident in an article published in Upakhyane Upadesa, Part II. This article was translated by Bhakti-caru Swami into English. It also appeared a few years back in one of the Back To Godhead Magazines. Some excerpts follow below. Our comments for the sake of clarification appear within square brackets.

“Ekalavya wanted his skill to be greater than that acquired by learning the Vedic wisdom directly from a bona fide spiritual master [ i.e. by personally approaching and serving a bona fide guru J, as Arjuna had done. By asking Dronacarya to do something about Ekalavya, Arjuna showed Ekalavya that Ekalavya’s approach to learning the Vedic science was wrong. If Arjuna had not mercifully pointed that out to him, impersonalism would have prevailed. To learn sciences and devotions, people would have created imaginary, mundane, unconsciousgurus instead of [personally] approaching a [living] bona fide guru.

So Arjuna took care that such an atheistic principle not be established. Arjuna was not envious of Ekalavya. Arjuna’s action was a manifestation of his mercy toward Ekalavya and the whole world.

If Ekalavya had been an unalloyed devotee of his guru, Krsna would not have destroyed such a guru-bhakta, an earnest disciple of the guru... But Ekalavya was killed by the hand of Krsna. That is what finally happened to Ekalavya.” Comment: Ekalavya’s mistake was that he did not approach a living guru, and served and pleased him. He made a mystical form of his guru (who was living) and worshipped that mystical form and indeed obtained extraordinary powers of archery. However, his approach was illegitimate. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura explains that Ekalavya’s approach was opposite to that of Arjuna who directly and personally served his guru in his manifest living form.

The RtVik approach to take shelter of Srila Prabhupada through his books is like that of Ekalavya. One who is not initiated by Srila Prabhupada in His Divine Grace’s manifest presence and who only wants to approach Srila Prabhupada through his books, not recognizing Srila Prabhupada’s disci-



# 100 Deviations

ples as gurus, might say that he is getting mercy from Srila Prabhupada but his approach is illegitimate. Indeed, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati warns us that Ekalavya's approach would bring about impersonalism.

## 127 Following Duryodhana's approach

Do they really imagine that ISKCON will ever accept their concocted doctrine as a standard tenet of Vaisnava philosophy and practice? One is reminded of Duryodhana. Everyone told him that he should give up his illicit pursuits; that there was no way he could win against the Pandavas, for God was on their side. Bhishma told him, Dronacarya told him, Vyasadeva came and told him, his own mother told him, but he just wouldn't listen. He was so stubbornly convinced he could defeat the Pandavas because of his large army with Bhishma and Drona in it to protect him.

When Krsna went to Hastinapura on His peace mission, to try and stop the war, he was very kind to Duryodhana. He told him to give up his enmity against the Pandavas and rule the world together with them. He knew that Duryodhana was into power so he told him that together with the Pandavas he'd be invincible. Duryodhana simply wouldn't listen. Like a child he complained to Krsna that He was always favoring the Pandavas. Krsna, getting a little impatient with Duryodhana, reminded him that he had behaved very obnoxiously towards the Pandavas. Then Duryodhana said the most amazing thing. He said:

"I have looked into my own heart very carefully, and I have not been able to detect even the slightest fault there." The RtVik-vadis are like that. Depending on their false egos they think they can defeat the ancient guru-parampara system that was put in place by Krsna Himself, and taught by Srila Prabhupada to his disciples. But just like Duryodhana couldn't win, because he was working against the Supreme Lord and His devotees, the RtVik-vadis can't win. They will never succeed in introducing their deviant doctrine in ISKCON.

## 128 Misusing the sarva-dharman parityajya verse

Some pro-RtViks claim that Srila Prabhupada's final order in that famous "henceforward" letter (wherein they claim that Srila Prabhupada ordered the RtVik system to be continued after his departure) supercedes all of the previous instructions that Srila Prabhupada had given. They quote the Gita in an attempt to substantiate this point. Their idea is: the final order of the Lord in the Gita, sarvadh,arman parityajya . ' supercedes and invalidates all of the previous statements of the Lord in the Gita. You may think it sounds funny but it is actually an argument of some pro-RtViks.

If we examine this, we find that this argument is incorrect. According to the previous acaryas it is not the philosophy of the Gita that the final order supercedes and invalidates all the previous orders of the Lord. This is a wrong understanding of the Gita.

All of the instructions of the Gita are pertinent and valid, not only the final order (carama upadesa). tat tu samanvayat gati-samanyat. The entire Gita teaches saranagati from the beginning to the end.

The final order of the Lord just makes it clear how to do it. Even the message of surrender (sarana-gati/prapatti) is explicitly stated in many places in the earlier chapters:

7.15: *na mam duskrfino mudhah prapadyante naradhamah*

7.19: *jnanavan mam prapadyate*

2.7: *sisyas te 'ham sadhi mam tvam prapannam*

7.14: *mam eva ye prapadyante mayam etam taranti te*

Besides that, Srila Prabhupada writes in his commentary, that the surrendering process is known as bhakti. How many verses are needed to show that Krsna teaches pure bhakti in the Gita prior to the sarva-dharman verse? Other Vaisnava-acaryas teach the same point. Srila Vedanta desika in his Tatparya-candrika subcommentary on Srila Ramanuja's Gita-bhasya has glossed that all the eighteen chapters of the Gita teach surrender, prapatti. Besides that, Lord Krsna's final order is supported by external evidence from the sruti, etc. In his Gitartha-sangraha-raksa commentary on Yamunacarya's Gitartha-sangraha which is a summary of the Gita, he has stated that the process of surrender is not only the Lord's final order, but also a standing and eternal process by which the



## 100th Deviation

living entity is delivered. He does this by quoting the sruti (atma-buddhi-prakasam mumuksur vai saranam aham prapadye). Sruti is eternal, meaning that all the syllables in the four Vedas appear eternally in the same order. Smṛti isn't like that though the message is eternal. So that verse, which is actually from the Svetasvatara Upanisad, proves that surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is an eternal, standing instruction of the Lord and not merely a final order.

So if one wants to say that Srila Prabhupada has given his final order superceding the previous orders, quoting the Gita to support that claim, it just shows that one doesn't know what one is talking about.

First of all the final order of the Lord does not supercede the previous orders; secondly that final order is the same as an eternal standing instruction of the Lord to the living entities. The RtVikvadis, if they want to adopt the same mode of reasoning, have to explicitly show that:

1. Srila Prabhupada's so called final order to conduct post samadhi RtVikism was given all the time from 1966 ( or earlier) onwards
2. They have to show that the post-samadhi RtVik system has some sastric basis or some other explicit external evidence Since they have not been able to do that their idea of Srila Prabhupada as the eternal diksa guru has to be rejected as mental speculation.

### 129 Flag-waving

"We are the real followers of Prabhupada!" proclaim the RtVik-vadis. But they fail to support such chauvinistic zeal with any concrete evidence. They have published enthusiastic statements such as: "Let us cooperate under the direction of Srila Prabhupada's final order." But under closer scrutiny we find no evidence whatsoever that Srila Prabhupada ever considered a post-samadhi RtVik system, or that the RtVik-vadis tend to cooperate with the appointed final authority in ISKCON, the Governing Body Commission.

### 130 The Goebbels approach

Although the RtVik idea under whatever headings it has been presented has been officially rejected in ISKCON, RtVik-vadis stubbornly and aggressively keep propagating it as if it were something of value. It is as if they have been trained up by the ghost of Goebbels (the propaganda minister of Hitler) who said that if you keep repeating a lie enough times, in the end everyone will believe it.

## Conclusion

As we have shown there is no scope for introducing RtVik-vada in ISKCON. The idea simply has no basis in guru, sadhu, and sastra. Aside from being non-Vedic there is also nothing to indicate that this is what Srila Prabhupada wanted. The RtVik-vadis claim that this is indeed what Srila Prabhupada wanted, but they have not been able to present any evidence to support that claim.

The only piece of evidence they have been able to produce in their favor is the word "henceforward" in the July 9 letter. This cannot by any standard be considered sufficient evidence to support an idea for which there is no reference in Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy. It is not very convincing to suggest that Srila Prabhupada would break away from the timeless tradition of the guru-parampara on the basis of one single word spoken in a letter that wasn't even written by Srila Prabhupada himself.

To the objection that RtVik-vada has no basis in guru, sadhu and sastra, the RtVik-vadis have claimed that Srila Prabhupada was not obliged to follow guru, sadhu and sastra, but that he, as an empowered acarya, could institute new rules as he saw fit. We have discussed how the acceptance of a living guru is a principle of devotional service and not a detail according to Srila Rupa Gosvami, and also how Srila Prabhupada repeatedly confirms that an acarya always follows the principles of guru, sadhu and sastra.

We would like to conclude by hearing from Ajamila Dasa, who personally witnessed how the, RtVik speculation was invented during the middle of the 1980's.



“When the whole RtVik idea emerged around the mid-eighties, the original RtVik protagonists, Rupa Vilasa, Karnamrta, and Nityananda, rang me from USA and asked me to support their idea that Srila Prabhupada desired a RtVik system. When I asked them for evidence they quoted the “henceforward” letter, but I was not convinced. I said, “Ring me back in a few days and I’ll tell you what Srila Prabhupada has said in Siksamrta, “ which was on the verge of being printed. When they rang back I quoted from the above letter and many other letters which they were not aware of, much to their annoyance. When I said to them that if you look at the evidence in its entirety it is very clear that Srila Prabhupada wanted a regular guru system, and that the current problems were not an excuse to come up with a concocted idea. This angered them immensely to the point of shouting uncontrollably and calling me ill names and offering threats of defamation in their infamous Vedic Village Review. Thus, I saw the birth of the Kali-yuga RtVik philosophy arise from of a group of uncooperative anti-GBC dissidents bent on satisfying their emotional frustrations. In the Kali-yuga there is no shortage of such uncontrolled people and so the impotent RtVik-vadis don’t re-cruit any-one new but rather grub on ISKCON’s dissidents. None of the RtVik evidence has any real strength. Their evidence is never clear-cut but always ambiguous and interpretable. When Srila Prabhupada says that a disciple can, after the disappearance of his/her spiritual master, accept disciples without any limitation, and that this is the law of disciplic succession, it is uninterpretable evidence. This law cannot be changed. The Rhviks speculate that Srila Prabhupada wanted to change this timeless law, and that he explained it all in one word “henceforward” which for most sane people usually means until I die, unless explicitly other-wise stated. In a court of law, the RtViks henceforward argument would be quickly dust binded.

There is no precedent in the history of bona fide Vaisnavism of someone taking diksa from a previous acarya posthumously. Following the RtVik idea anyone can become a disciple of anyone! A 30 yearold sannyasa disciple of Srila Prabhupada might meet an impudent 1-year-old upstart diksa disciple of Rupa Goswami and would have to hit the dust in fear of offence. Such is the silliness of the RtVik concoction. It is simply a childish idea for silly people, and not for anyone serious. If Srila Prabhupada actually wanted to make a major radical change in the guru-parampara system he would have spelled it out very clearly and not left it all wrapped up in a subjective interpretation of one ambiguous word like henceforward, expecting us to cut and paste other things to it to make it all add up. The RtViks try to get around the uninterpretable absolute philosophical evidence given by Srila Prabhupada in the above letter to Tusta Krsna by minimizing the authority of Srila Prabhupada’s letters, saying that the letters are not as absolute as his books. Yet the RtViks use (construe) the letters when it suits them, particularly the “henceforward” letter which they claim is their strongest evidence. Srila Prabhupada gave us so many absolute instructions in his letters about various ISKCON projects not mentioned in his books. He also gave in his letters absolute philosophical explanations and directions on guru-tattva which are no less absolute than his Bhaktivedanta purports. To suggest other-wise would be offensive.

‘Our only wish is to have our consciousness purified by (all ) the words emanating from his lotus mouth.’

The RtVik-vadis will bark but the ISKCON caravan will pass.”

Hare Krsna.

## Appendix 1

The following email message, “Public Notice of Self Annulment”, was recently posted for the information of all devotees.

Text C0M:1960576 (40 lines)

From: Internet: Pancajanya aol.com

Date: 23-Dec-98 21:34



# 100 deviations

To: Webmaster TCP [ 5685 ] (received: 24-Dec-98 00:08)  
 Cc: Global Free Forum [3999] (sender: Webmaster TCP)  
 Subject: Public Notice of Self-Annulment

## Public Notice

### To all the Hare Krsna devotees:

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada!

Herewith I am self-annulling the fire ceremony involving me performed by Kapindra Dasa (Swami), whose organization is known as Prabhupada Sankirtan Society, Inc. Performed by Kapindra on March 4, 1996, this fire ceremony supposedly initiated me as a diksa disciple of Srila Prabhupada. During performance of this fire ceremony Kapindra chanted on tulasi beads, which he then handed to me, and gave me a so-called spiritual name.

I had no prior association with any bonafide Vaisnava-sampradaya. Kapindra led me to believe that, by participating in his so-called RtVik-officiated ritual fire ceremony, I was accepted by Srila Prabhupada and he became my diksa guru. Although this initiation occurred only in imagination (being in fact bogus, unauthorized, uncustomary and anti-sastric), nevertheless, Kapindra performed this invalid fire ceremony. On December 16, 1998, I personally begged Kapindra to annul this fire ceremony. I asked him to free me from the connection and entanglement with him and to release me from the initiation of the RtVik-bija. However, Kapindra stone-heartedly and stubbornly refused to mutually annul this fire ceremony. Therefore, I am declaring to the Vaisnavas and to the world that I have not for some time, nor am I now, nor will I ever be considered a RtVik initiated disciple of Srila Prabhupada. Now I am publicly annulling Kapindra's fire ceremony. Thus, I exorcise RtVik-bija identification with Kapindra and the so-called spiritual name he gave me.

I humbly offer sincere apology to the lotus feet of my eternal vartma-pradarsaka and siksa guru, Srila Prabhupada. I am self-annulling Kapindra's invalid fire ceremony. I beg forgiveness from His Divine Grace for my presumptuous ignorance and evident insincerity which made me complicit in the concoction known as "RtVik", which I now know to be an apasiddhantic conspiracy of persons who nurse within their hearts deep-seated grudges. As a self-appointed "RtVik-acarya", Kapindra continues to perpetrate a dangerous and destructive hoax against the innocent and less-intelligent devotees of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna.

Depending upon the mercy of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu,  
 I beg to remain, Your servant,  
 Bhaktin Catherine Blackwell  
 New York, New York

## Appendix 2:

### Chronology of selected instructions of Srila Prabhupada on initiation

#### 1966

"That is a chance given, that you can become a brahmana, you can become a great devotee of Lord Krsna, and you can become the spiritual master of the world...**If you, some of you at least understand this science and take up this science, you become future hope of the, this country or the world.** That is my request to you, that you should take this chance and become a spiritual master for all the people." (New York, July 29, 1966)





# 100 Deviations

- “If you want to understand the transcendental science, then you have to approach to a spiritual master.”  
And who is spiritual master? ...one who is coming into that disciplic succession and by coming from that disciplic succession, he is firmly convinced in the Absolute, he is firmly conversant in the Absolute Truth, he is guru.” (New York, August 12, 1966)
- “So there is no bar for anyone, that one cannot become the spiritual master. Everyone can become spiritual master, provided he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa. That is the only qualification.” (New York, August 17, 1966)
- “These two qualifications. You have to find out that whether this man is coming from disciplic succession, srotriyam... Just like in the Bhagavad gita it is said, *evam parampara praptam*: ‘By this disciplic succession, this science of Bhagavad gita was learned.’ So you have to approach the spiritual master who is coming down from that disciplic succession. Then he is bona fide.” (San Francisco, March 3, 1967)

## 1967

*“Because in Indian society it is simply taken that the brahmanas and the sannyasi can be spiritual master. But Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, “No. Anyone can become spiritual master provided he’s conversant with the science.” (April 5-6, 1967, San Francisco)*

## 1968

- “A person who is liberated acharya and guru cannot commit any mistake, but there are persons who are less qualified or not liberated, but still can act as guru and acharya by strictly following the disciplic succession.” (New York, 26 April, 1968)*
- “So Rupa Gosvami says who can be a spiritual master. So he has given specifically this definition, that one who has got controls over the tongue, over the speech, over the mind, over the belly, and over the genitals, and over the anger. If anyone has control over these six things, then he can become spiritual master. Prthivinn sa sisya: ‘He is allowed to make disciples all over the world.’ Otherwise not.” (Montreal, July 9, 1968)*
- “The disciple, if he cannot understand the statement of the scriptures or any saintly person, he submits his doubts before the spiritual master and he clears it. In this way we have to make progress.” (Montreal, July 9, 1968)*

## 1969

- “Still, you see practically: he has got a spiritual master, and Narada, and he’s giving instruction. So this is necessary... **Therefore we have to learn Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the disciplic succession.** Our, this sampradaya, the Gaudiya-sampradaya, is also in the same line-Narada, Vyāsadeva. Narada is the disciple of Brahma. It is, therefore, called, this sampradaya... This party is called Brahma-sampradaya. Brahma-madhva-gaudiya-brahma-sampradaya. Originally from Brahma. Brahma instructed Narada. You’ll find in the Bṛtagavata. Brahma is instructing Narada. Now you see Narada is instructing Vyāsadeva. Similarly, Vyāsadeva instructed Madhva Muni. Now, Madhva Muni, by disciplic succession, Madhavendra Puri. Now, Madhavendra Puri instructed Isvara Puri. Isvara Puri instructed Lord Caitanya. Lord Caitanya instructed the six Gosvamis. The six Gosvamis instructed Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. Kṛṣṇadāsa instructed Narottama dāsa Thākura. Narottama dāsa Thākura, Viṣvanātha Cakravartī. Viṣvanātha Cakravartī, Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī. In this way, there is a clear line of disciplic succession.” (New Vrindavana, June 11, 1969)*
- “Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I have got my disciples, so in the future these many disciples may have many branches of disciplic succession. (Los Angeles, 25 January, 1969)*
- “Narada Muni is our original Spiritual Master and he has dragged so many fallen souls towards Kṛṣṇa, and we are also hoping to be dragged by Him **through the disciplic succession.***



# 100 deviations

*Otherwise, if we study our own qualifications, there is none, rather I have got so many disqualifications.” (Hawaii, 10 March, 1969)*

*“Lord Caitanya says that **“Every one of you become the spiritual master, every one of you. Why one, two? Every one of you.”** “Oh, spiritual master is very difficult job.” No. No difficult oh. Caitanya Malva... Amara ajnaya: Just try to carry out My order. That’s all. Then you become spiritual master.” (Columbus, May 9, 1969)*

*I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary work. At the same time, **I shall request them all to become spiritual master. Every one of you should be spiritual master next.** (Hamburg, September 5, 1969)*

## 1970

*From the life of Narada Muni it is distinct that although He was a conditioned soul in His previous life, there was no impediment of His becoming the Spiritual Master. This law is applicable not only to the Spiritual Master, but to every living entity. (Los Angeles, 21 June, 1970)*

*“In spite of having all these qualities, if he is impersonalist and voidist, he cannot become spiritual master. Avaisnavo gurur na syad vaisnavah, svapaco guruh: **On the other hand, if a person is Vaisnava, devotee of the Lord, even if he is born in the family of candela, less than the sudra, he can become the spiritual master.**” These are the injunctions of the sastra. (Surat, December 23, 1970)*

## 1971

*“Everyone can, whoever is initiated, he is competent to make disciples. But as a matter of etiquette they do not do so in the presence of their spiritual master. This is the etiquette. Otherwise, they are competent. They can make disciples and spread... they are competent to make disciples.” (Detroit, July 18, 1971)*

## 1972

*“**So far designation is concerned, the spiritual master authorizes every one of his disciple.** But it is up to the disciple to carry out the order, able to carry out or not. It is not that spiritual master is partial, he designates one and rejects other.*

*He may do that. If the other is not qualified, he can do that. But actually his intention is not like that. **He wants that each and every one of his disciple become as powerful as he is or more than that.** That is his desire. Just like father wants every son to be as qualified or more qualified than the father. But it is up to the student or to the son to raise himself to that standard.” (San Diego, June 29, 1972)*

*“If you are incapable of raising yourself to the standard of becoming spiritual master, that is not your spiritual master’s fault, that is your fault. He wants, just like Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, amara ajnaya guru hana, By My order, every one of you become a guru.” (San Diego, June 29, 1972)*

*“Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s principle is anyone who knows the science of Krsna, he can become spiritual master. This is the principle.” (Vrndavana, October 16, 1972)*

*“One must approach. Sanatana Gosvami’s teaching us the Vaisnava principle that one should approach a proper spiritual master. So he’s approaching Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So one may argue that “Where is Caitanya Mahaprabhu now? Where is Krsna now?” It doesn’t matter. Krsna’s words are there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s words are there. Instructions are there. So if we follow the direction and instruction of Caitanya Mahaprabhu or Krsna **under the guidance of a superior, bona fide spiritual master**, then we associate with Krsna or Caitanya Mahaprabhu without any deviation.” (Vrndavana, October 19, 1972)*

## 1973

*“So how everyone can become a spiritual master? A spiritual master must have sufficient knowledge, so many other qualifications. **No. Even without any qualifications, one can become a spiritual***



# 100 रत्नौ वेदवैताने

*master. How? Now the process is, Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, amara ajnaya: “On My order.” That is the crucial point. One does not become spiritual master by his own whims. That is not spiritual master. He must be ordered by superior authority. Then he’s spiritual master. Amara ajnaya. Just like in our case. Our superior authority, our spiritual master, he ordered me that “You just try to preach this gospel, whatever you have learned from me, in English.” So we have tried it. That’s all. It is riot that I am very much qualified. The only qualification is that I have tried to execute the order of superior authority. That’s all. This is the secret of success.” (London, August 3, 1973)*

*“Our process is evam parampara praptam imam rajarsayo viduh. Parampara. What Krsna said, the disciplic succession will say the same thing. But they are speaking differently. So therefore we don’t take them as bona fide. They are not bona fide.” (Paris, August 13, 1973)*

*“From a bona fide spiritual master you receive knowledge, because he will present as he has received from his spiritual master. He’ll not adulterate or manufacture something. That is the bona fide spiritual master. And that is very easy. To become spiritual master is not very difficult thing. You’ll have to become spiritual master. You, all my disciples, everyone should become spiritual master. It is not difficult. It is difficult when you manufacture something. But if you simply present whatever you have heard from your spiritual master, it is very easy.” (London, August 22, 1973)*

*“Don’t try to become over spiritual master. Then you’ll spoil. Remain always a servant of your spiritual master and present the thing as you have heard. You’ll be spiritual master. This is secret. You should know it. Don’t try to become overintel ligent. That will spoil. Evam. parampara praptam imam ca jarsayo viduh.” (London, August 22, 1973)*

*“There are so many qualification. But one may not have all thesE qualifications. He may be rascal number one, but still, he car become spiritual master. How? Amara ajnaya. As Krsna says, a Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, if you follow, then you become spit itual master. **One may be rascal number one from materia estimation, but if he simply strictly follows whatever is said by Caitanya Mahaprabhu or His representative spiritual master. then he becomes a guru.** So it is not very difficult. One may not think that “I am not qualified to become guru. “ No, **you are qualified if you follow strictly the parampara system. Then you are qualified. That’s all.**” (London, August 22, 1973)*

*“This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s mission, that “I give you order. You, every one of you become a spiritual master.” “Oh, I have no qualification. How can I become spiritual master? Il requires high knowledge, Sanskrit understanding.” “No, you don’t require anything. Simply you speak krsna-upadesa. ’What is krsna-upadesa? Krsna says, sarva-dharman paritya-jya mam ekam saranam vraja. You simply go door to door and say, “Please surrender to Krsna.” Then you are spiritual master. I have done this. What I have done? I have gone to your country to say this thing, that “Here is Krsna, the Supreme Personality, of Godhead. You surrender; you become perfect.” That is being done.*

*So it is not very difficult to become spiritual master. Simply you have to become very serious and sincere to the service of Krsna.” (Delhi, November 4, 1973)*

*“You become a spiritual master under my order, under His order. Don’t manufacture yourself. Under the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. That is called pararn.para system, one who is following in disciplic succession the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.” (Los Angeles, December 6, 1973)*

## 1974

*“This is the magic. If you adulterate nonsensically like a rascal, then you cannot become a spiritual master. **If you simply follow what Krsna has spoken, then you become spiritual master.** Very simple thing. It doesn’t require education. **You can hear from your spiritual master what has Krsna said.**” (Bombay, April 4, 1974)*



# 100 Deviations of RtVikism

*"If God sees that you are sincere, He will give you a spiritual master who can give you protection. He will help you from within and without, without in the physical form of spiritual master, and within as the spiritual master within the heart." (Rome, May 23, 1974)*

*"This is acarya. You behave yourself exactly as it is stated in the sastra, as it is ordered by Caitanya Mahaprabhu, as it is ordered by Krsna... Apani acari jivere sikhaya. And you teach all your disciples, who comes to you as your disciples, teach them. This is acarya.*

*So acarya, guru, representative, it is not difficult. Simply one has to become very, very sincere." (Vrndavana, August 15, 1974)*

## 1975

*"Evam parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh. So we have to follow the acarya. Then, **when we are completely, cent per cent follower of acarya, then you can also act as acarya.** This is the process. Don't become premature acarya. First of all follow the orders of acarya, and you become mature. Then it is better to become acarya. **Because we are interested in preparing acarya, but the etiquette is, at least for the period the guru is present, one should not bacon acarya.**" (Mayapura, April 6, 1975)*

*"So try to follow the path of acarya process. Then life will I successful. And to become acarya is not very difficult. Fir of all, to become very faithful servant of your acarya, folio strictly what he says. Try to please him and spread Krsr consciousness. That's all. It is not at all difficult." (Mayapura, April 6, 1975)*

*"Every student is expected to become Acarya. Acarya meat one who knows the scriptural injunctions and follows them practically in life, and teaches them to his disciples... Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bona fide Guru and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of you Spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, an in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples will out any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bona fide Spiritual Master and spread Krishna consciousness very widely, that will make me and Krishna very happy." (New Delhi, 2 December, 1975)*

## 1976

*"By My command you become a guru and save this land This was also the mission of my guru maharaj and it is my mision. You will perfect your life if you make it also you mission." (New Delhi, 1 September, 1976)*

*"You each be guru," he said. "As I have five thousand disciples or ten thousand, so you have ten thousand each. In this way, create branches and branches of the Caitanya tree." (Mayapura GBC meetings 1976)*

*"The guru must come through the parampara system. Then he is bona fide. Otherwise he is a rascal. Must come through the parampara system, and in order to understand tad-vijnanam, transcendental science, you have to approach guru. You cannot say that "I can understand at home." No. That is not possible. That is the injunction of the all sastra. (Hyderabad, August 19, 1976)*

*"Even though you see that he is materially born, his behavior is like other men. But because he says the same truth as it is spoken in the Vedas or by the Personality of Godhead, therefore he is guru. Because he does not make any change whimsically, therefore he is guru. That is the definition. It is very simple." (Hyderabad, August 19, 1976)*

## 1977

*"By reading, you cannot understand. Tad-vijnanartham se gurum evabhigacchet. That is also vidhilin: "In order to understand that science, he must go to guru." (January 8, 1977, Bombay)*





# 100 deviations

**Prabhupada:** *Anyone Krsna conscious, he's the messiah. Every one. Why one? All of us. Gaurangera bhakta gan.e, jane jane sakti dhari, brahmanda tan saksi(?): "The devotee of Lord Caitanya, every one has so immense power that every one, they can deliver the whole universe." Gaurangera bhakta jane, jane jane sakti..., brahman,da tan... That is Gauranga's men.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *Only you are that powerful, Srila Prabhupada. We're like...*

**Prabhupada:** *Why you are not? You are my disciples.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *We're like the bugs.*

**Prabhupada:** *"Like father, like son." You should be. Gaurangera bhakta..., jane. Everyone. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa. He asked everyone, "Just become guru. " Follow His instruction. You become guru. Amara ajnaya. Don't manufac'ture ideas. Amara ajnaya. "What I say, you do. You become a guru. " Where is the difficulty? "And what is Your ajna" Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa. Bas. Everything is there in the Bhagavad gita. You simply repeat. That's all. You become guru. To become a guru is not difficult job. Follow Caitanya Mahaprabhu and speak what Krsna has said. Bas. You become guru." (Bombay, April 15, 1977)*

**Prabhupada:** *Yes. I shall choose some guru. I shall say, "Now you become acarya. You become authorized." I am waiting for that. You become all acarya. I retire completely. But the training must be complete.*

**Tamala Krsna:** *The process of purification must be there. Prabhupada: Oh, yes, must be there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu wants that. Amara ajn.aya guru liana. "You become guru." (laughs) But be qualified. Little thing, strictly follower... (Bombay, April 22, 1977)*

*"When I order, "You become guru," he becomes regular guru. That's all. He becomes disciple of my disciple. That's it." (Vrndavana, May 28, 1977)*

*"And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, amara ajnaya guru hana. One can understand the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he can become guru. Or one who understands his guru's order, the same parampara, he can become guru. And therefore I shall select some of you." (Vrndavana, May 28, 1977)*

## Appendix 3

### Some Resolutions Concerning the Doctrine of RtVikism

.From the Minutes of the Annual GBC General Meeting, Sridhama Mayapura, February 5 -15, 1999

Whereas in 1990 the GBC Body ruled that the doctrine called the "posthumous RtVik theory" or "post-samadhi RtVik theory" (hereinafter called "RtVikism") a "dangerous philosophical deviation" and prohibited its teaching and practice in ISKCON, and

Whereas the decision of the GBC Body has been recorded in the ISKCON Law Book under the heading "Specifically Out lowed Doctrines and Practices", as follows:

#### 6.4.7.2 "Posthumous RtVik" Doctrine

The doctrine that Srila.Prabhupada continues to initiate direct diksa disciples after his departure from this world through officiating priests (RtViks) is a dangerous philosophical deviation. It is totally prohibited in ISKCON. No devotee shall participate in such posthumous rtwik initiation ceremonies in any capacity including acting as RtVik, initiate, assistant, organizer, or financier. No ISKCON devotee shall advocate or support its practice.

And,

Whereas a number of devotees in and around ISKCON, some of whom hold positions in ISKCON as managerial and spiritual authorities, have begun again to practice and preach a refurbished version of RtVikism, and





# 100 Deviations

Whereas the GBC Body has again carefully examined the case for RtVikism as currently presented, having had representatives meet at various times and places with its advocates to hear them make their case, and has, as a body sitting in plenary session on 9 February, 1999, carefully heard the case personally advocated by Adridharana Prabhu, president of Calcutta temple, Sattvika Prabhu, vice-president of Calcutta temple, and Madhu Pandita Prabhu, president of Bangalore temple, and Whereas the GBC Body has given the current versions of rtvi-kism careful attention and all due deliberation to the best of its ability:

## 1. It Is Hereby Resolved That...

1. The GBC Body states that it finds the arguments for RtVikism as represented to it by Madhu Pandita Dasa and other of his associates, and as preached by them around the world, to be erroneous in its conclusion as well as specious and sophistical in its conduct. The case for RtVikism is false and duplicitous in its method of procedure and in its selection and use of evidence. It depends heavily on speculation and word-jugglery. It presents its radical and speculative departures from the consistent teachings of Srila Prabhupada, his predecessor acaryas, Srila Vyasadeva, and the Lord Himself, under the name of “tradition” and “no change.” The effect of these arguments is only to bewilder, delude, and misguide innocent devotees from the teaching set forth by Krsna and upheld without exception by all Vaisnava acaryas.
2. The GBC reaffirms strongly its resolution of 1990 entitled “Prohibition Order Against the Posthumous RtVik Theory.”
3. ISKCON Law 6.4.7.2 is hereby amended to read as follows:  
6.4.7.2 “RtVikism” aka “Posthumous RtVik Theory,” “Post Samadhi-RtVik Theory,” “Proxy Initiation Theory,” “No Change Theory,” etc.

The doctrine that Srila Prabhupada desired to continue to act as diksa guru after his departure from this world and did not desire any of his disciples to give diksa in succession after him is a dangerous philosophical deviation. RtVikism directly goes against the principle of parampara itself (of successive diksa and siksa gurus), which sustains the pure teachings and practices of Krsna consciousness. This principle has been established by Krsna and is upheld by all Vaisnava-acaryas. Indeed, it is accepted by all followers of Vedic culture. RtVikism is thus an extreme deviation. It is utterly erroneous to espouse it, deluding and misguiding to teach it, and blasphemous to attribute it to Srila Prabhupada. No one who espouses, teaches, supports in any way, or practices RtVikism can be a member in good standing of ISKCON.

The GBC acknowledges that this Body has since 1977 made changes in the manner in which initiations are carried out in ISKCON, is contemplating changes at present, and may well make changes in the future. However, the GBC Body maintains that these changes concern practical adjustments according to time, place, and object undertaken in the application of absolute, unchanging principle. RtVikism contravenes absolute, unchanging principle. Hence it is categorically different from the permissible adjustments within the power of the GBC. In spite of its adjustments, the GBC Body has held steadily to the principle of parampara and remains committed to it, for it is the teaching of Srila Prabhupada and his predecessors, and it is a necessity in the matter of sustaining a living tradition. (Passed unanimously.)

## 302. (Law] Enforcement of ISKCON Law Regarding RtVikism

Whereas a number of devotees in and around ISKCON have begun again to practice and preach “RtVikism,” even though it is prohibited by ISKCON Law as a “dangerous philosophical deviation,” and

Whereas among those espousing or preaching RtVikism there are several who hold positions in ISKCON as managerial or spiritual authorities,



## 2. It is hereby resolved that,..

1. The GBC Body unequivocally rejects in principle any proposals that RtVikism be in some manner or another accommodate ad or tolerated within ISKCON. (Passed unanimously)
2. The GBC Body hereby makes known it's strong determination to enforce ISKCON law in the matter of RtVikism, and it enjoins upon all its members and other official bodies, officers, and other authorities in ISKCON, such as Regional Governing Boards, regional secretaries, GBC ministers, sannyasvs, initiating gurus, temple presidents, and temple officers, the responsibility to take every appropriate action, according to ISKCON law, to enforce the prohibition against RtVikism in ISKCON. (Passed unanimously)
3. A. The GBC Body declares that to espouse or preach RtVikism includes the following censurable offenses under the provision of ISKCON Law (8.4.1. 3):
  - i. Conscious and serious philosophical deviation from Srila Prabhupada's teachings
  - ii. Willful violation of GBC Body resolutions
- B. Further, the GBC Body hereby rules that in relation to the espousal of RtVikism these offenses are of a sufficiently serious nature as to warrant immediate imposition of the penalty of probation, including its attendant program for rectification.
- C. Further, the GBC Body hereby empowers the Executive Committee for the year 1999-2000 to place any ISKCON member who espouses RtVikism on probation, and, in consultation with that member's immediate local authority or local GBC member, to establish a specific program of rectification, as provided in ISKCON Law 8.4.2.2, which can include
  1. Disciplinary or remedial transfer to another location.
  2. Reformatory change of service.
  3. Prohibited for visiting or living in a specified temple or community.
  4. Specific spiritual remedial programs.
  5. A divestiture of certain actions for the period of probation.
  6. Reasonable and just reformatory programs.

“Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bona fide Guru and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of you Spiritual master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples will out any limitation. This is the law of disciplic succession. I want to see my disciples become bona fide Spiritual Master and spread Krishna consciousness very widely, that will make me and Krishna very happy.” -Srila Prabhupadas letter 2 December, 1975

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